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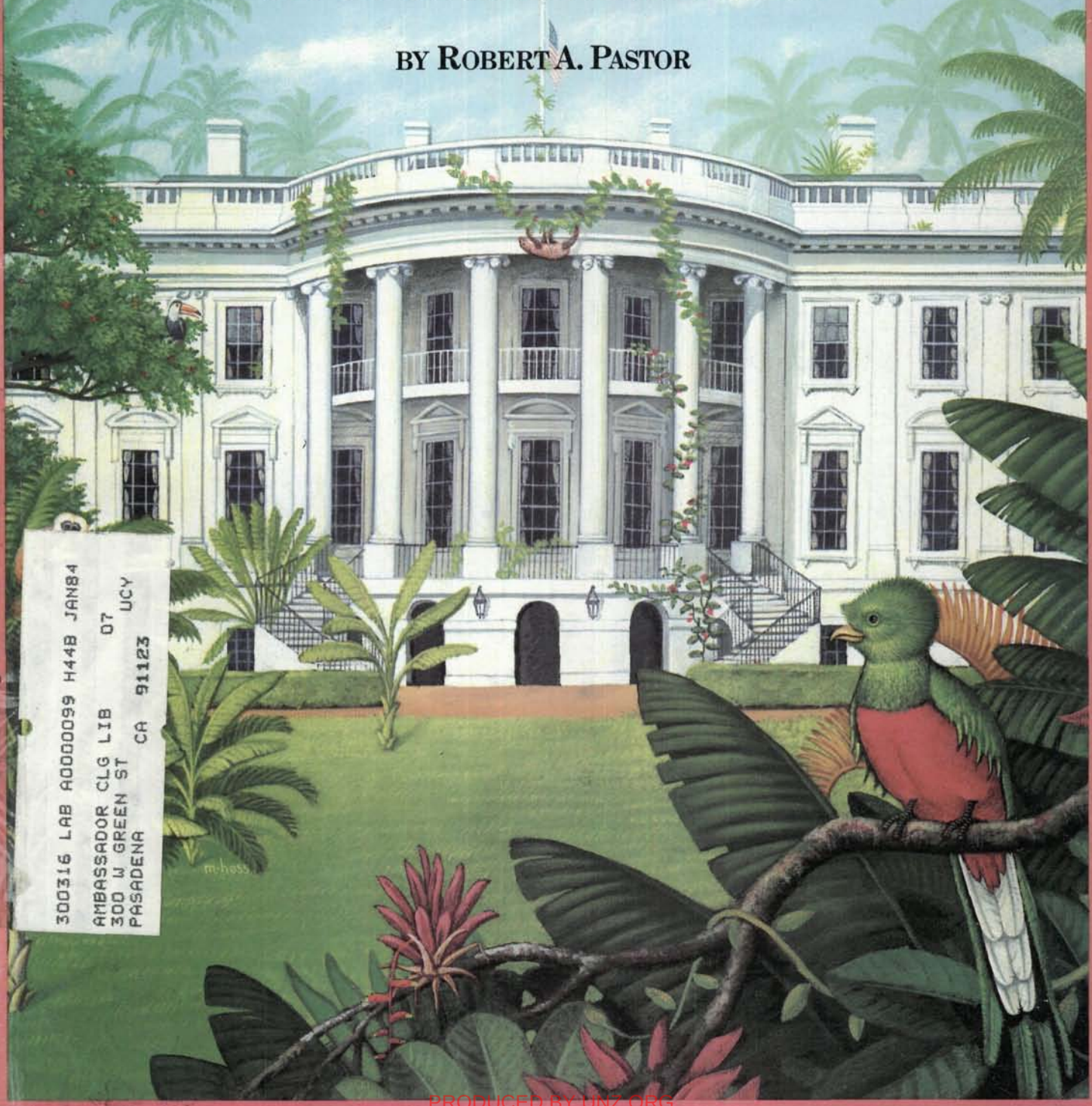
OUR REAL NATIONAL INTERESTS IN CENTRAL AMERICA

BY ROBERT A. PASTOR



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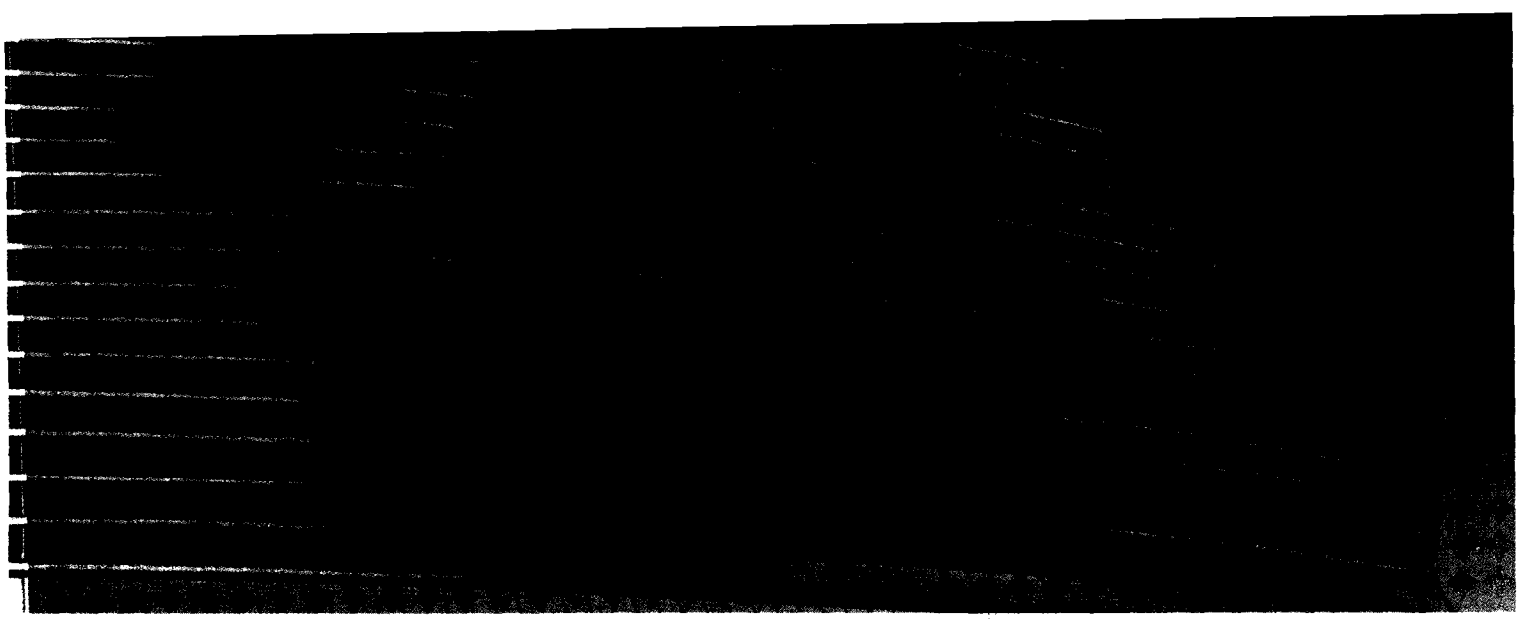

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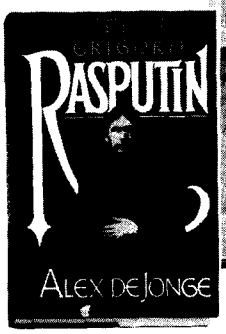

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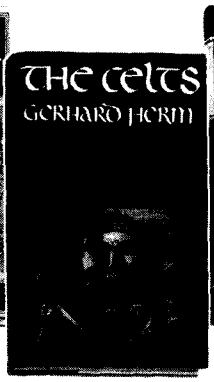

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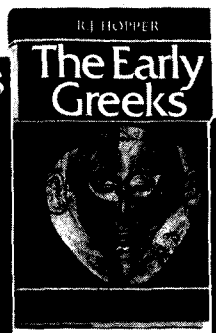

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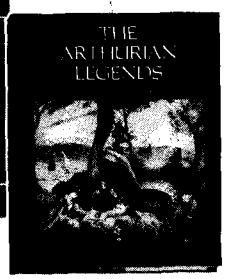

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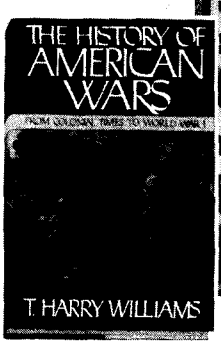

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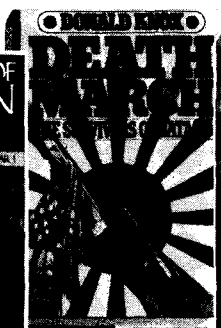

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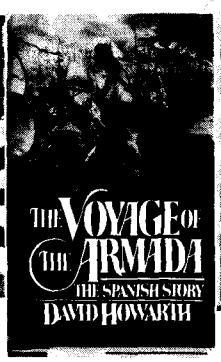

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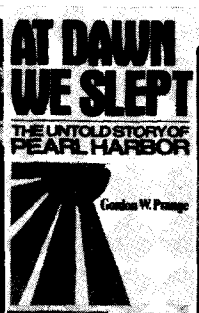

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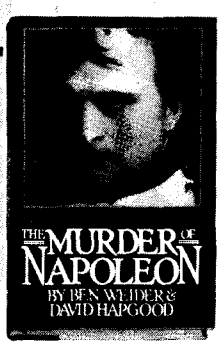

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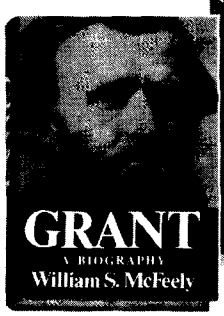

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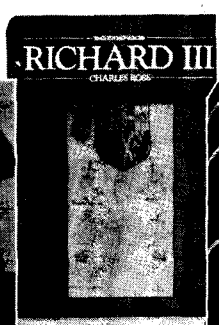

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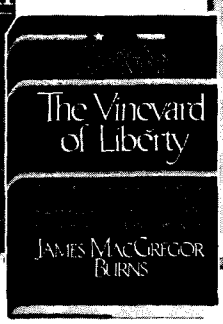

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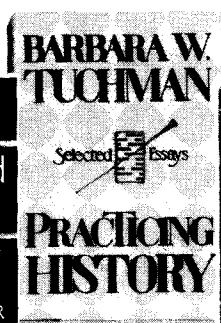

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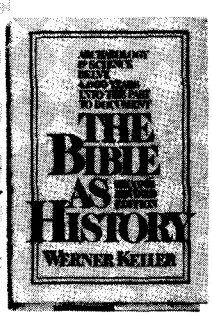

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

LATIN AMERICAN POVERTY

I wish to compliment both *The Atlantic* and Michael Novak on the article "Why Latin America Is Poor" (March *Atlantic*). Only rarely is the destructive impact of Catholicism addressed in such an open and intelligent manner.

The predominance of Protestant Nobel Prize recipients speaks to the subtle but destructive inhibition of thought and creativity in Catholic educational systems, which emphasize rote learning of dogmatic truth rather than the creative play of free thought. The Church treats freedom of thought as potential heresy.

JOHN J. MCCARTHY, M.D.
Sacramento, Calif.

Michael Novak plausibly demonstrates that Latin America's poverty can be traced tc cultural factors rather than to economic materialism. Blaming developed countries for their underdevelopment serves as an excuse for lack of meaningful action and prevents Latin Americans from taking responsibility for their condition.

Most development experts agree with Mr. Novak that economic growth requires the stimulation of entrepreneurship, but many of these same experts also assert that LDCs need to concentrate wealth to create investment capital, and avoid redistributive income policies because they lead to unproductive consumption. Deliberately concentrating wealth in a few hands is the path taken by Brazil. Some variation of this strategy is essential for successful borrowing abroad, and an authoritarian government will ensure proper concentrations of wealth. Foreign investment is almost a prerequisite of development. The U.S. borrowed tremendous amounts in the nineteenth century.

Another significant obstacle is that in any culture, proposals to raise the income of the poor always become controversial. Lack of mass purchasing power due to excessive concentration of wealth was a major factor leading to the Great Depression. As that example showed, a developed economy requires adequate levels of aggregate demand that can be achieved only through a wide sharing of the national income. However, even the relatively modest income policies of the thirties, in the context of the most democratic country in the world, produced violence. What, then, can we expect in Latin America, with its autocratic traditions and attitudinal blocks to entrepreneurship and mass purchasing power? Are we being unfair when we berate Latin Americans for not taking action and then block actions they propose because of our geopolitical conflict with the Russians?

EDUARDO G. TORRES
Boston, Mass.

That Roman Catholic clergymen in Latin America, and elsewhere, are opposed to the U.S. version of capitalism and market economies in the region should not surprise Mr. Novak. Roman Catholic priests, after all, established communal societies throughout the Americas (Jesuits in Argentina, Franciscans in the U.S.).

Since the beginning, priests have seen capitalism enrich a few, including many a Latin American diocese, and leave millions dispossessed amid a great potential for wealth. They feel—as some of their predecessors did in colonial times—that Christianity and capitalism don't mix except when capitalism is tempered by responsibility and care for those who have been left without property. For this reason many cardinals, bishops, and priests—and quite a few nuns and monks—have been reading Karl Marx and are considering how his writings can be expurgated of atheism and given a theological foundation. After all, the pagan philosophy of Plato was shaped into part of Catholic dogma to be superseded later by Aristotle as interpreted by St. Thomas Aquinas.

MIGUEL ACOCA
New Orleans, La.

Michael Novak effectively explains historic errors of the Catholic church and governments of Latin America in retarding economic growth in the region. But in his vexation at some demagogic Third World spokesmen, Novak forgets the evidence in his own article that he is now beating a dead horse.

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That old gray mare in clerical garb is now often more closely aligned with the masses than with the elite. This doesn't necessarily make the Church's economic outlook more sophisticated; but, for better or worse, it has reduced the Church's influence in a number of countries, including El Salvador and Brazil. The elite, particularly in Brazil, have developed new economic priorities and modernization without Church consultation.

While skillfully parrying some Third World critics, Novak is not, I hope, suggesting that American investment, galvanized by the Protestant ethic, is an unalloyed blessing. Ruthless, profiteering development is a temporary gain but a long-term loss. The export of some American enterprise to exploit cheap labor abroad and avoid higher overhead at home is largely negative in its motivation and effects.

FREDERIC S. LA CROIX
Des Moines, Iowa

Michael Novak replies:

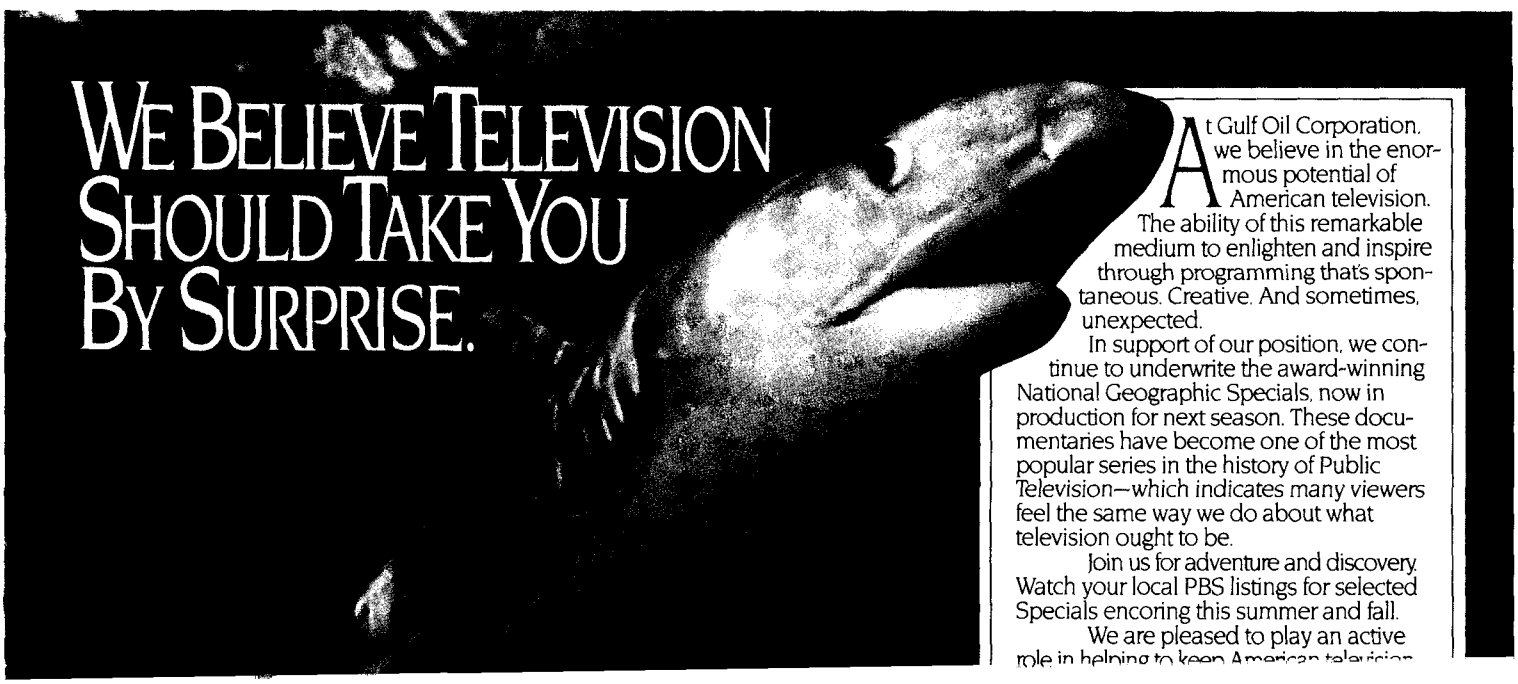
As picnics have flies, so few blessings are unalloyed, and all economic gains have costs. Mr. La Croix's "old gray mare" is not as important to economic development as ideas. *Stewardship is a powerful religious idea, which quite tempers how firms build long-term relations. Further, investment abroad is likely to prove more mutually creative than foreign aid. The world is now as interdependent as Christianity has long imagined it ought to be.*

Eduardo Torres correctly stresses bringing incomes above the level of subsistence, to the point at which markets, economic activism, and entrepreneurship take wing. We ought not to "berate" anyone, but should help in all possible ways to bring Latin America's poor to ownership, to a just wage, and to those forms of economic *activism that are so much more successful than* political *activism in producing both liberty and bread. We should support individuals and groups who share such a vision.*

Dr. McCarthy may be suffering from ecumania: *a disease that causes one to think all churches good but one's own; a prescription for which is to cherish creative thinking in every place it can be found. Catholic Brussels and Liège prospered while Calvinist Scotland was economically backward, as even Adam Smith observed, and the World Council of Churches today is more anti-capitalist in its publications than the Vatican.*

Miguel Acoca seems to confuse mercantilism (enriching Latin American dioceses) with democratic capitalism. One aim of the latter is to promote ownership, as in the U.S. Homestead Act and in current exemptions of interest on home mortgages; another of its aims is to provide a "safety net" for the poor. Still another is that every single citizen be able to better his or her condition. Neither democracy nor capitalism can thrive without fostering responsibility and care, for which Christianity is neither a necessary (Japan) nor sufficient (Latin America) condition.

The problem with Marx as a new Aristotle is not his atheism or his radical materialism or his reliance on resentment and violence. It is his failure to grasp three points: the limits of politics, the danger of state tyranny, and the creativity of the free intellect. Despite dozens of trials, in no place has Marxism worked. Giving Marx a theological foundation is—well, quixotic.



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Poet in Training

Perhaps Sylvia Plath does not require defending; certainly she is past it, and, as Katha Pollitt points out in her generally sensitive and moving commentary on Plath's journals ("Poet in Training," May *Atlantic*), her husband and mother appear to be suitably protective, though perhaps self-protective as well.

But I had to wonder about the emphasis Pollitt places on Plath's obsessive—and by implication damaging—"rivalrousness." Certainly Plath's mental anguish and increasing lack of perspective can be seen only in reference to herself. But is it really "safe to say no writer has ever been more driven by a need for a bankable, quantifiable, publicly rewarded success"? I have seen many writers so driven—some handicapped, some inspired by what strikes me as the unavoidability of comparison to others' books, others' advances, others' publication, fellowships, prizes, grants. Of course it is bad that this is the case—bad for all writers, not just Plath. Where there are so few arbiters and outlets of approval for the "seriously ambitious," is it any wonder that a young writer still early in her career—and she was—would want to "leave them in the dust"?

Mary E. Ryan
Seattle, Wash.

Endless Budget Deficits

It was a shame that James Fallows's otherwise illuminating and bold comments on the current federal budget discussions ("Endless Deficits," May *Atlantic*) should be marred by what cannot be other than a logical slip-up.

Fallows argues that indexing of tax schedules, that is to say the adjusting of tax brackets with inflation, "will mean that the government's expenses are driven up by inflation but its receipts are not." A rate inherently keeps receipts rising with inflation. As incomes rise with inflation, maintaining the same tax bracket distribution through indexing ensures that government receipts increase at the rate of inflation, but no faster. A failure to index, on the other hand, increases the rate of taxation in a deceptive fashion and increases government revenue at a rate *faster* than that of inflation.

Theodore G. Shepherd
Cambridge, Mass.

James Fallows replies:

If the government operated on principles of strict logic, Mr. Shepherd would of course be right. I made the logical slip-up he detected because I was thinking about the practicalities of inflation's effect on both taxes and benefits. It is true, as Mr. Shepherd says, that as inflation pushes taxpayers into higher brackets, it increases the government's receipts at a rate faster than that of inflation. In theory, Social Security payments and other benefits do not rise quite so fast—but in practice they often do, because most of the "cost-of-living adjustment" formulas exaggerate the effects of inflation. The result is a structure that takes in money faster than it should, and also pays it out faster. The two sides of that equation together endanger our economic health; my point was that "tax indexing" repairs one side of the equation while doing nothing about the other, leaving a perilously unbalanced system.

James Fallows's analysis of the Reagan budget restates a fallacious economic assumption that has universally bedeviled us. It makes the distinction, somehow, between government spending and taxes. In the real world, government spending *is* taxes.

This mysterious distinction gives rise to "deficits." People are induced to believe that deficits are a device of government to finance spending, and are distinct from taxes.

Striking the word "deficits" from the economic lexicon would be a vast improvement. "Installment taxes" should replace the word if anyone needs to divide taxes into categories. Thus, current taxes plus installment taxes equal government spending. In this light we see immediately that Ronald Reagan has not, and will not, cut taxes.

When we admit that deficits are taxes on the installment plan, we discover why supply-side tax cuts failed to stimulate the economy. There weren't any!

Jim Russell
Chardon, Ohio

In James Fallows's analysis of "endless deficits," President Reagan's economic problem is stated in current political perspective, but he ignores the long-term, underlying problem. Economists and most political observers are concerned only with the present and the immediate future, the time to the next election. In this time span, Fallows correctly summarizes the three choices for balancing the budget, and most agree that relative balancing is a prerequisite to control of inflation and a return to a tolerable economic environment. We can attack the complex organisms of the banking system and our political structure or we can attack the defense budget or we must face the necessity of reducing middle-class entitlements. An optimistic conclusion can be drawn from this choice.

If we ignore physical restraints, economic growth can be realized by identifying priorities and taking action on the choice. There is no real problem with a drastic reduction in the defense budget or in cutting back on most of the entitlements now paid to persons above the poverty line. Neither would be missed after the dust settled, and the economy should respond quickly. The Republican Party might regain its bright and shining future.

But can we afford the luxury of avoiding solution to real political-economic problems, recognizing only the short time span? In decade perspective, the easy solutions will not be available. The things of the earth are not in infinite supply and the supplies of some of the necessities are projectable in the precision required for decision.

More important, the time span required to realize the political-economic adjustments is also predictable in physical-economic terms. Oil is the resource without which the U.S. economy cannot function. We do not have enough of it and we will not be able to import enough of it to support our present population for its normal life expectancy. Today's oil glut is a very temporary situation. The United States now imports half as much oil as we are able to produce. Even with the most optimistic projection of future conservation and future development of alternative energy resources, our dependence on imports will increase. Our children will live in a world where the imports required to support our present standard of living will not be available.

James Fallows's third choice for ending endless deficits is a necessary solution now. We have to tackle "the vast complex organisms of the national banking system and the Congress of the United States" if we are to preserve future freedom.

Samuel M. Dix
Grand Rapids, Mich.

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REPORTS & COMMENT

WASHINGTON

PROGRAMS WORTH SAVING

An argument that Democrats ought to defend programs that provide food, education, and legal services to the poor

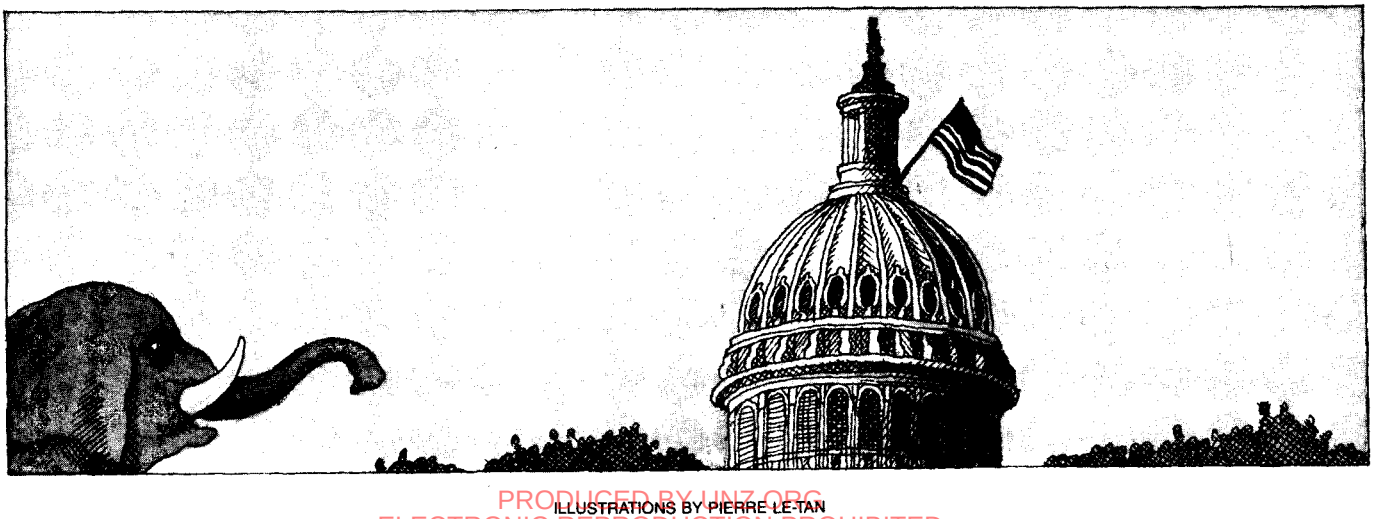
A sense of the Democratic Party's retreat since Ronald Reagan's election is manifest in the tendency of Democrats to apologize for the excesses of previous Democratic administrations. It is also apparent in what often seems a note of embarrassment when a Democrat speaks in defense of programs that involve the federal government, cost money, and help the needy—the poor, the uneducated, the malnourished, the handicapped, and the victims of discrimination.

A decent society tries to solve its pressing problems even when they directly afflict only a limited sector of the population. An effective government deals with pressing problems when circumstances permit the formation of the political coalition needed to support change. The period of unprecedented economic prosperity we experienced during the 1960s, featuring steady growth and negligible inflation, allowed the government to turn to problems that had been unaddressed for years. The result was an explosion of Great Society legislation; we took major steps against discrimination, poverty, hunger, lack of educational opportunity, and environmental degradation.

Obviously, today's changed political climate, produced in large part by economic hard times, has eroded support for some programs, particularly those narrowly targeted to the needs of the poor or minorities. This is a political reality that no one can deny. Moreover, if we are to succeed in controlling the federal budget, in order to bring down inflation and interest rates, these programs will be forced to compete for a piece of the shrinking federal pie, and to make do with less.

But recognizing these realities is one thing; it is quite another to say, as many do, that all of the programs were ill conceived from the outset; that we've devoted too much time, attention, and money to the needy and deprived; that the programs have failed; or that the need for the efforts no longer exists. Democrats have a compelling responsibility to stand against a conservative tide by affirming the value of these programs, which have succeeded and remain essential. Here are some examples.

THE FOOD STAMP program has become so symbolic of a federal program gone bad that Senator Jesse Helms and his ultra-conservative Congressional Club recently used it as the centerpiece in a national fund-raising campaign. "Your contribution will be used by the Congressional Club to expose one of the most expensive, most abused and badly managed programs in the federal budget—FOOD STAMPS," their letter stated. "Your contribution for as little



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as $15 can help save the American taxpayers *billions of dollars* in the years ahead."

Is there fraud in the program? Yes. Is the program abused? Undoubtedly. Should the program be terminated or gutted? Definitely not. According to the most recent survey data available, 78 percent of the 22 million food-stamp recipients are children, elderly, disabled persons, or single-parent heads of households. More than half of all food-stamp households have gross incomes of less than $3,600 per year, and an equal number have no liquid assets at all. Ninety-three percent of food-stamp recipients have liquid assets of less than $500.

Those who rant about food-stamp ripoffs forget the conditions that led to the creation of the food-stamp program in the 1960s. In 1967, a team of physicians, sponsored by the Field Foundation, traveled throughout the Mississippi Delta, the coal fields of Appalachia, and coastal South Carolina to study hunger among the people of America. What they found, in their own words, was shocking. "Wherever we went and wherever we looked, we saw children in significant numbers who were hungry and sick, children for whom hunger is a daily fact of life, and sickness, in many forms, an inevitability."

Ten years later, another team of physicians visited the same areas. Although many of the outward signs of poverty were still present, the extent of malnutrition, of hunger, was appreciably reduced. The reason for this dramatic change, in the opinion of both the doctors and the people they visited, was the food-stamp program.

Congress has taken significant action over the past few years to reduce the incidence of fraud and abuse in the program. Asset tests were tightened to ensure that people who owned luxury cars and vacation homes would not be eligible. Those disqualified from program participation for fraud are now required to repay the amount fraudulently obtained. States have been given incentives to reduce errors in issuing food stamps. Provisions regarding food stamps for aliens have been substantially revised, and virtually all college students are ineligible. By the end of 1980, before President Reagan took office, Congress had already enacted laws that eliminated nearly 1.5 million participants from the program and reduced the pool of persons potentially eligible

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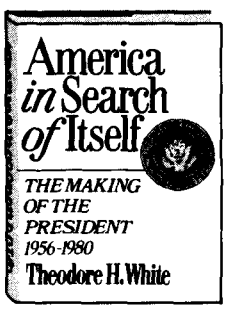

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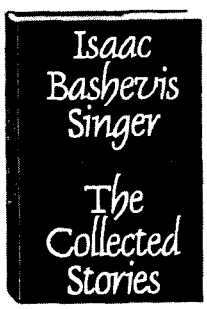

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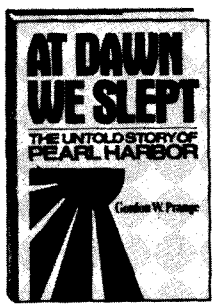

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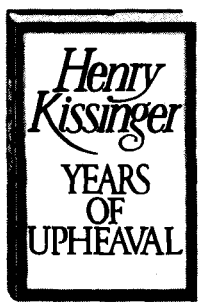

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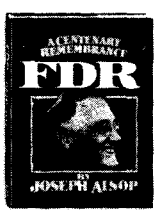

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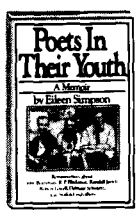

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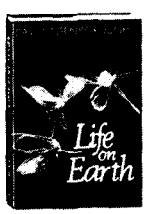

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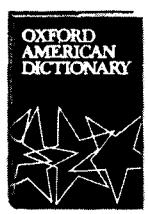

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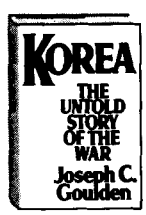

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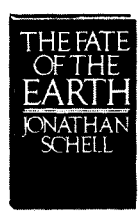

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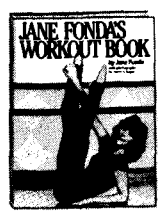

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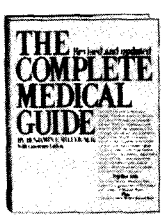

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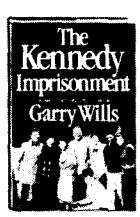

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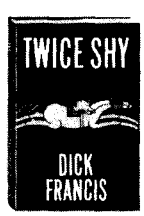

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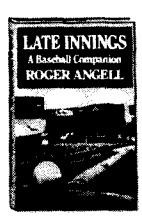

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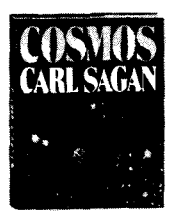

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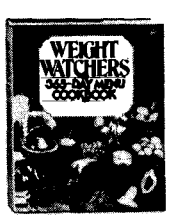

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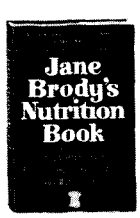

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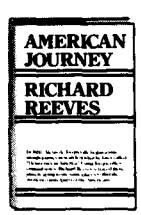

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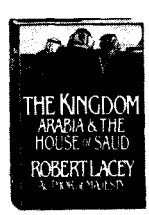

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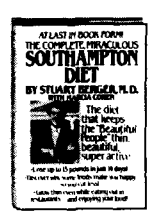

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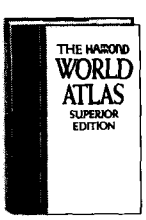

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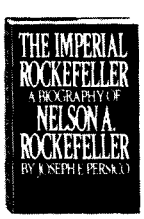

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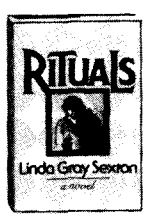

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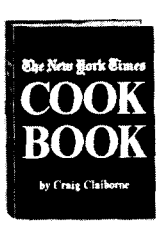

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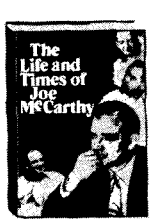

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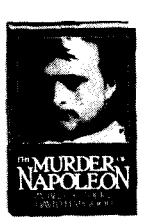

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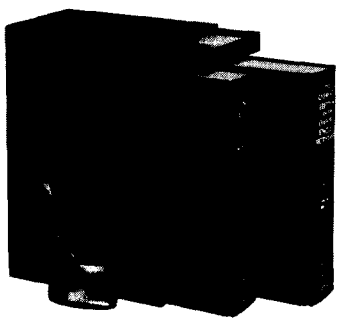

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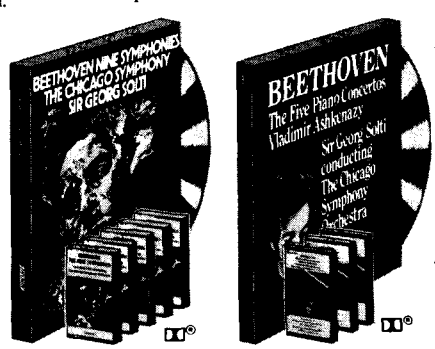

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These cuts will not reduce fraud and waste. They will mean only that most of the people who receive food stamps will have less food. They mark a retreat from our commitment to provide nutritional assistance, through cuts not only in food stamps but also in school lunches; in the special supplemental-feeding program for women, infants, and children; in nutrition education in our schools. For most of our population, the major nutritional worry is being overweight. Various books on how to diet dominate our best-seller lists. Without belittling that concern in any way, we should be sensitive to the appalling irony of taking steps that could mean the recurrence of starvation in this generally prosperous nation.

THE LEGAL SERVICES Corporation has long been a favorite target of those on the far right, who have repeatedly characterized the corporation as wasteful and bloated, and have accused it of financing "social engineering" and immersing itself in "social activism."

With the election of Ronald Reagan, the assault on the Legal Services Corporation acquired new intensity. President Reagan formed a deep dislike for legal-services attorneys while he was governor of California, when legal actions brought by the California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA) caused him significant embarrassment. Combining this animosity with a general interest in budget cutting, President Reagan and David Stockman have asked Congress to abolish the corporation. They propose that the governor of each state should decide whether or not to fund any kind of legal-services program from proposed federal block grants that have been targeted for other services.

The Legal Services Corporation exists to further perhaps the noblest of this country's historical ideals: equal justice for all. It came into being, in 1974, only after other ways of improving access to

legal counsel for the poor had been tried and proven insufficient.

These programs, voluntarily developed by the legal profession, proved neither numerous enough nor broad enough to meet the needs of the economically disadvantaged. In 1964, civil legal-aid offices serving the poor reached fewer than one percent of those in need.

In response to that deficiency, in 1965, the federal government initiated a modest ($600,000) experimental legal-services program in the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO). By 1974, the majority of Congress, supported by the Nixon Administration, agreed that the federal legal-services program needed to be continued and insulated from political pressures jeopardizing the attorneys' ability to represent their clients' best interests. The Legal Services Corporation was created.

As for the charge that the Legal Services Corporation is a tool for "social engineering," in fact the overwhelming part of the legal-services lawyer's work is concentrated on basic issues of survival—food, shelter, health, and income. Legal-services lawyers represent the elderly in a nursing home where care is abusive, the mother who is left without money to feed her family when a benefit check does not arrive, the poor who are forced to live in unheated apartments because their landlord has not paid the utility bill. Some observers have marveled that legal-services attorneys can withstand the tedium of the average caseload.

Opponents of the corporation rail against misuse of class-action suits by legal-services attorneys. Some abuses have occurred, and Congress has prohibited legal-services attorneys from initiating lawsuits on certain subjects. For the most part, however, the class-action suits have been undertaken to protect poor people whose rights under certain statutes or regulations were being violated by state or local governments. For example, in Florida, the state welfare department, acting without any legislative authority to do so, required Medicaid patients to pay part of the purchase price for medicine. Legal-services attorneys challenged this rule, and the federal court halted enforcement.

In Maryland, legal-services attorneys sued the state to regain unemployment compensation for 24,000 Marylanders whose benefits were reduced through an erroneous interpretation of the law.

In Vermont, legal-services attorneys challenged Housing and Urban Development policies that resulted in tenant rentals in excess of maximum amounts allowed under federal statutes governing the Section 8 housing program.

These are not wild and irrational lawsuits brought by radical lawyers seeking to engineer social change. They are lawsuits that address glaring examples of wrongful government policies and protect basic individual rights.

Critics of the corporation say that they want to return the legal-services program to local control. But under current arrangements, each legal-services project is governed by a board of directors composed of local people, 60 percent of whom are local attorneys and at least one third of whom are local low-income persons eligible for legal assistance. That *is* local control. The Reagan Administration seeks something very different; placing legal services in a block grant would sound a death knell for the program because many governors, like the former governor of California, would like the "troublesome" legal-services attorneys to disappear.

If the Legal Services Corporation is dismantled, government's promise to the disadvantaged of our country that someone will listen to their lawful grievances will have been broken. If that promise is broken, the consequences could be dire, for the whole society as well as for the poor.

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HOW TO SAVE YOUR LIFE AND THE ONE NEXT TO YOU

OVERCOMING YOUR PSYCHOLOGICAL RESISTANCE TO SEAT BELTS MAY BE THE KEY.

The facts are startling. Experts estimate that almost half of all automobile occupant fatalities and many serious injuries might have been avoided if the people had been wearing seat belts. That's because most injuries occur when the car stops abruptly and the occupants are thrown against the car's interior or out of the car. Belts reduce this risk.

Many people say they know the facts, but they still don't wear belts. Their reasons range all over the lot: seat belts are troublesome to put on, they are uncomfortable, or they wrinkle your clothes. Some people even think getting hurt or killed in a car accident is a question of fate; and, therefore, seat belts don't matter.

If you're one of those people who don't use belts for one reason or another, please think carefully about your motivations. Are your objections to seat belts based on the facts or on rationalizations?

Here are a few of the common rationalizations. Many people say they are afraid of being trapped in a car by a seat belt. In fact, in the vast majority of cases, seat belts protect passengers from severe injuries, allowing them to escape more quickly. Another popular rationalization: you'll be saved by being thrown clear of the car. Here again, accident data have proved that to be untrue—you are almost always safer inside the car.

Some people use seat belts for highway driving, but rationalize it's not worth the trouble to buckle up for short trips. The numbers tell a different story: 80% of all automobile accidents causing serious injury or death involve cars traveling under 40 miles per hour. And three quarters of all collisions happen less than 25 miles from the driver's home.

When you're the driver, you have the psychological authority to convince all of the passengers that they should wear seat belts. It has been shown that in a car, the driver is considered to be an authority figure. A simple reminder from you may help save someone's life.

Another common myth: holding a small child in your arms will provide the child with sufficient protection during a crash. The safety experts disagree. They point out that even during a 30 mph collision, a 10-pound child can exert a 300-pound force against the parent's grip. So please make sure Child Restraint Systems are used for children who aren't old enough to use regular seat belts.

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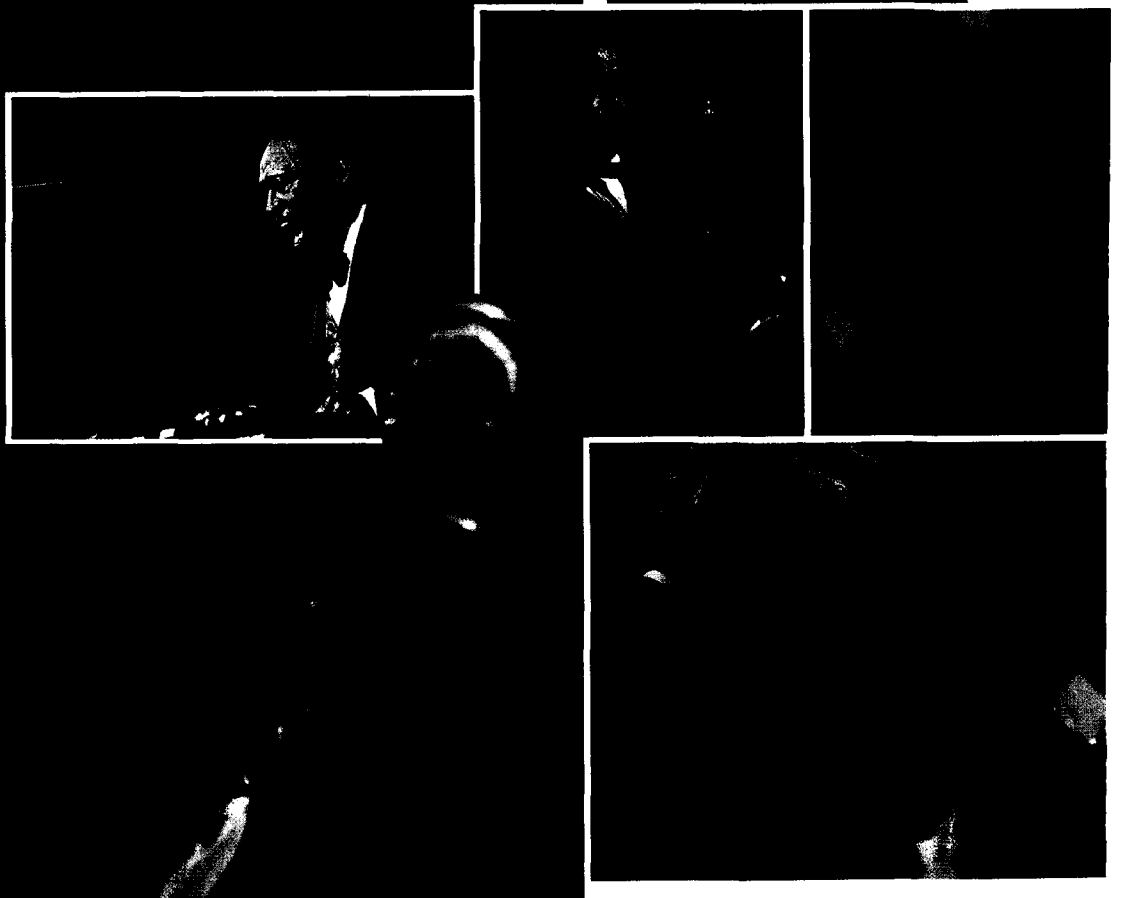

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—Dave Brubeck

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- ***The first and only collection to tell the entire jazz story.***

FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER, the greatest recorded performances in the history of jazz will be brought together in a single, definitive record collection.

This unprecedented collection is being issued by the Institute of Jazz Studies, home of the world's largest archive of original jazz recordings. It will include the most important recordings of every major jazz artist who ever lived. And it will span all periods . . . all labels . . . all the great styles that have made jazz the most inventive and exciting music of our century.

From the world's largest jazz archive

The Greatest Jazz Recordings of All Time is the culmination of years of work carried on at the Institute's headquarters at Rutgers University—by a staff of authorities unique in all the world.

As they set about making their selections, no resource was denied them. They considered countless recordings, beginning with the Institute's own archive of more than 60,000 records. In addition, they received the support of all the great jazz labels, whose vaults hold the master recordings essential for this collection.

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As a result, this will be the first collection to capture the all-time best of jazz, as it flourished in each generation. The greatest music from the *golden age*—the dazzling trumpet solos of Louis Armstrong, the biting elegance of Bix Beiderbecke's cornet, and the vital, vibrant piano styles of Fats Waller.

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Some of these recordings, such as Teddy Wilson's solo piano version of 'Somebody Loves Me,' have actually *never* been issued before. Others have been unavailable for decades—such as Art Tatum's 'Chloe.' And among the most fascinating of all are the previously unreleased studio "takes" of well-known numbers like 'Benny's Bugle' by Charlie Christian and 'I Can't Get Started' by Bunny Berigan.

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The sound quality of each record will be a revelation. For every vintage recording will first undergo a painstaking restoration. Each will be electronically "cleaned," groove by groove . . . bringing you closer to the actual performance than was previously possible.

Furthermore, the Institute of Jazz Studies has appointed The Franklin Mint Record Society, one of America's leading producers of high-quality records, to press the records for this collection. And they will use a special vinyl compound containing its own antistatic element. In addition, each record will be pressed in an atmosphere controlled "clean room." The result—a pressing of superior fidelity that is also more durable and resistant to dust. A record of true *proof-quality*.

The records will be issued in hardbound albums. Each album will hold a set of four 12″ long-playing records. And each will present a specially conceived *program of selections*, which brings together related performances in a way unique to this collection. Accompanying each album will be an expert commentary, written under the supervision of Institute Director Dan Morgenstern.

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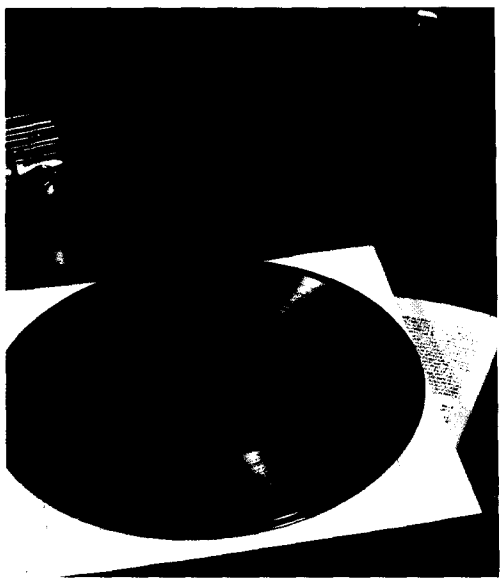

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"NO LAW I HAVE signed or will ever sign means more to the future of America." These were the words of President Johnson when he signed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) into law, thereby fulfilling his pledge to make education "the first work of these times and the first work of our society." With such lofty goals, the federal government began its five-pronged effort to help educate poor children, to stock school libraries, to promote community-wide projects for educational change, to spur education research and development, and to upgrade state departments of education.

Now, a decade and a half later, American schools, particularly inner-city schools, still suffer from grave shortcomings. The litany of problems is familiar: thousands of functionally illiterate high school graduates; a decade of declining achievement-test scores; violence in the schools; labor strife and teacher layoffs; rebellion against taxes and bond issues necessary for schools to keep apace with inflation. These problems have been exacerbated in some communities by emotional and exhausting battles over school busing.

We stand at a crossroads with respect to the federal government's role in education. The path suggested by the Reagan Administration is to reduce sharply (and ultimately eliminate) federal support for public education. Not only do Reagan Administration officials see federal involvement in education as a waste of taxpayers' dollars but they imply that the federal role in education has had a highly destructive effect.

I reject that notion entirely. While not every ESEA program has been a resounding success, we have made remarkable progress in spotlighting children's needs and in providing a modest beginning to educational equality for all children in this country. In 1950, for example, only 50 percent of our young people graduated from high school. Today, that figure is 85 percent. The increase for black youths is even more dramatic. In 1960, only 20.1 percent of blacks aged twenty-five or older had completed four years of high school. By 1976, the figure had more than doubled, at 44 percent. From 1968 to 1978, black enrollment grew from 6.4 percent to more than 10 percent of all college students. The achievement reflected in these statistics is real, tangible, and commendable.

Substantial evidence suggests that

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federal funds, beyond giving access to education, have actually enhanced the learning experiences of children. Title I of ESEA is the primary program of federal assistance to our nation's elementary and secondary schoolchildren. It recognizes that children from low-income families are the ones most likely to be deprived of appropriate educational experiences, and that local educational agencies cannot bear the heavy costs required to meet their special educational needs. In 1977, the National Institute of Education, the education-research arm of the government, conducted an extensive study of the Title I program. According to the institute's findings, Title I services make a distinct contribution to the learning of poor children. Detailed case studies of school districts receiving Title I funds revealed that "Title I students in every district received extra services—either more time in instruction, smaller group size, or more time with highly qualified teachers."

Perhaps the most encouraging accomplishment of Title I found by the institute is its effect on student achievement. The study indicated that first graders made average gains of thirteen months in reading and fourteen months in mathematics in the seven-month period between fall and spring testing. Third graders gained seven months in reading and fourteen months in mathematics. These gains are especially significant when one considers that without Title I, disadvantaged students usually have an average achievement gain of seven months per ten-month school year.

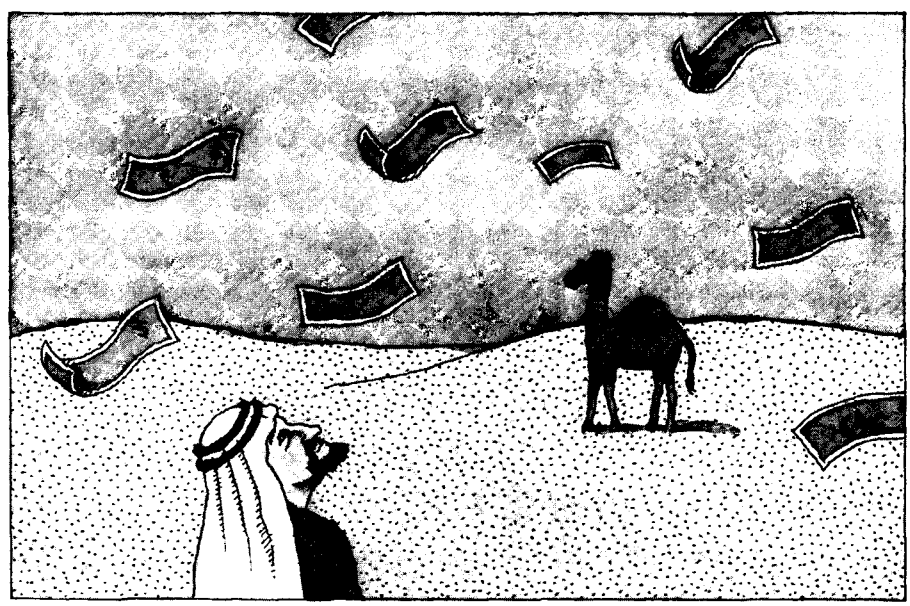
President Reagan says that he is not anti-education. He wants only to turn the responsibility for education back to the states, where it properly belongs. But we should remember that the federal government got involved in education in the first place because the state governments and local school districts defaulted on their responsibility to try and educate all of our children to their full potential. In many states, malapportioned state legislatures averted their eyes and turned deaf ears to the desperate educational needs of inner-city or minority children.

Reapportionment and the Voting Rights Act have increased the representativeness of many state legislatures and, to some extent, their sensitivity to urban problems. Unfortunately, at the same time, the states face some of the same pressures that burden the federal government. The affected cities must contend with a now-familiar but nevertheless desperate situation: the movement of middle-class families to the suburbs simultaneously eviscerates the cities' tax base and leaves the school systems heavily populated with the poor or minority children most in need of costly special-education services. Under these circumstances, the federal government's responsibility remains crucial, and the Reagan alternative becomes a cruel hoax, particularly when the administration seeks to cut federal aid to those school districts that are most in need while proposing to use federal tax revenues for tuition tax credits that only encourage middle- and upper-class men and women to remove their children from the public school system.

If the Reagan Administration intended to "fine tune" such programs as food stamps, legal services, and elementary and secondary education, I would be strongly supportive. If the Reagan Administration intended to rid the programs of fraud, waste, and abuse, I would be supportive. But, as I perceive it, this administration intends to destroy these programs and with them the whole notion of a federal responsibility to meet social needs. Fundamental principles of economic and social justice are at stake, and they are worth fighting for.

—Thomas F. Eagleton

Thomas F. Eagleton is senior Democratic senator from Missouri.



THE MIDDLE EAST

THE CURSE OF OIL WEALTH

As the oil market shrinks, countries that have grown fat on easy money will find it painful to cut back

WHILE A QUICK glance reveals glossy achievement and progress, closer scrutiny shows that Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Libya are in great danger—danger all the more insidious because it is hidden under an avalanche of wealth. Let us call these desert countries, which have much oil and few people, "sheikhdoms," for lack of a more precise word.

Until a generation or so ago, the sheikhdoms existed in a small world circumscribed by the desert and by Islam. They were backwaters—poor, simple places with nothing to offer the industrialized countries, and little influenced by the modern West. Their way of life had scarcely changed over a millennium. Then oil riches abruptly thrust them into the center of the world economy, tying them totally to it, deluging them with Western culture, and giving them startling economic and political power. The effects of this transformation have been overwhelming; although the sheikhdoms cling to tradition, everything in them has changed. New wealth has compromised the old social institutions and prompted a dangerous reliance on foreign money, labor, and know-how.

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These negative effects are not without precedent; other windfalls in the past have harmed their beneficiaries. Gold and silver from the New World made Spain rich in the sixteenth century but distorted its economy and weakened it in the long run. Peru had a boom in guano (used for fertilizer) in the mid-nineteenth century, and later, Brazil had a rubber boom; these made a few people rich but left no useful legacy—only some gaudy buildings, including an opera house in the Amazon jungle. Gold-rush sites in California and Alaska turned into ghost towns when the mining stopped. The trouble with booms is that they typically bring neither sustained economic growth nor cultural improvement; the riches they create are spent with abandon, disrupting normal behavior, fomenting unrealistic expectations, and inspiring envy. And all booms come to an end.

In fact, given the oil market's downturn in the past year, permanently static or declining revenues in the Middle East may already be at hand. Market forces have operated very efficiently for the countries that consume Middle East oil: conservation (in cars, heating, factories) and substitution (domestic oil, natural gas, coal, nuclear fission) have cut deeply into exports from the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Production, which peaked in 1977 at 31.8 million barrels a day, is down to about 16 million barrels a day. If OPEC nations should raise prices to make up for the smaller volume, they would lose still more of the market (through conservation and substitution), even though they might earn more in the short run. Should OPEC lower prices to increase volume, its members can expect importing countries to set quotas or import fees to keep consumption down, and, therefore, revenues still would fall. A major expansion in the industrial economies could reverse this trend, but only temporarily, because no one wants ever again to depend on OPEC.

Besides the inexorable force of supply and demand, OPEC members face other obstacles to increasing profits: the formation of a counter-cartel by consumers, war in the Persian Gulf, and breakthroughs in the efficiency of alternative energy sources. Any one of these initiatives would upset the world oil market and drastically reduce OPEC's income.

Profits from the export of petroleum have made many countries dependent on a continued oil boom. Countries with large populations—Indonesia, Nigeria, and Mexico, for example—look to oil revenues for development funds and are already facing the unpleasant consequences of having relied too much on this easy money to see them through. This is true also of Great Britain, which needs the North Sea revenues to stave off the worst effects of its current economic spin. Several minor producers—Cameroon, the Ivory Coast, Peru—have borrowed against future oil revenues; if these do not materialize, the governments may not be able to pay their bills.

No other countries, however, depend as much on the oil market as the sheikhdoms do. Oil lifted them from penury and it can return them to it, unless other sources of income are developed while the opportunity lasts. Political leaders of the sheikhdoms fully understand this vulnerability and are making strenuous efforts to diversify their income through investments at home and abroad. If these should substantially replace revenues from petroleum sales, the sheikhdoms can face the future with some equanimity; otherwise, they will face impoverishment. Unfortunately, alternate sources of revenue do not look promising.

The sheikhdoms have put aside far less money than they need to live off their investments. Net foreign assets of all Middle East OPEC members come to about $380 billion, but this figure is deceptively high because it lumps together state reserves and private funds. Private money is not available for state purposes, and has to be excluded from calculations about future government revenues. Almost half of this $380 billion is in private hands; Saudi, Kuwaiti, and UAE government holdings, which far surpass those of other OPEC members, total about $120 billion, $70 billion, and $30 billion, respectively. Enormous as these sums are, it must be remembered that the sheikhdoms produce little besides oil and cannot significantly increase their assets once oil sales decline. For the most part, their reserves amount to less than one year's budget; only Kuwait has two or three years' worth. Dividends from these assets are far too meager to compensate for declining oil revenues; in the Saudi case, annual dividends from $120 billion total about $15 billion—or about two months' spending at current rates. State expenditures so far exceed dividends that no sheikhdom could possibly retire on its foreign investments, now or in the foreseeable future.

Sheikh, emir, king, and colonel spare no expense to build up their countries' resources in the hope of lessening dependence on petroleum sales. Out of the $88 billion Saudi budget for 1981 to 1982, $7 billion goes for education, $10 billion for transportation and telecommunications, $7 billion for development and economic resources, $4 billion for public works, and nearly $8 billion for municipalities. More than a third of state spending is devoted to developing the country's non-oil sectors. But these expenditures are all futile. Oil billions have created a never-never land in which everything is subsidized with unearned money, rendering long-range planning nonsensical.

HUMAN RESOURCES ARE hard to develop in these circumstances. Persian Gulf students overwhelmingly prefer the liberal arts to technical studies, and they can expect high-paying jobs regardless of their skills and dedication. Within the sheikhdoms, academic standards tend to be low, because an aura of genteel good will discourages real competition and achievement. Students are not pushed to acquire the skills most needed to make the sheikhdoms independent of their oil incomes. Abroad, students from the sheikhdoms have earned a reputation for high living and casual efforts.

Large government subsidies shield industry from the hazards of competition and contribute to business mismanagement and labor inefficiency. Great industrial projects symbolize the sheikhdoms' concern for the future: modern and expensive factories now rise out of the sands at such unlikely spots as Misurata, Abu Khammash, and Ras Lanouf in Libya, Jebel Ali in Dubai, and Umm Said in Qatar. Largest of all are the industrial complexes at Yanbu and Jubail in Saudi Arabia, which will cost $30 billion and $50 billion, respectively. These plants will produce a wide range of primary products (petrochemicals, ammonia, steel, concrete) and many finished goods, mostly for export. But the construction and operating expenses in the sheikhdoms exceed comparable costs in the developed countries by about a factor of three. (In one case, British contractors planned a hospital for Iran that averaged $320,000 per bed, nearly twelve times the cost of comparable facilities in Great Britain.)

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The sheikhdoms hope that cheap natural gas and oil—which are used both for energy and as feed stock (the raw material for such products as plastic and nylon)—will nevertheless make it possible to manufacture products at competitive prices. For example, the gigantic petrochemical plant at Yanbu, which cost $2.4 billion, will receive natural gas at about one eighth of prevailing prices. But a haze of plenitude permits inefficiencies that more than make up for the cost advantages of cheap raw materials. Market research and cost accounting are neglected; for lack of regional coordination, factories are duplicated. The deserts supply only petroleum; foreigners must design, staff, manage, and maintain plants, and most of the consumers live thousands of miles away. Assigning contracts on a cost-plus basis (the contractor spends whatever is necessary and adds a percentage for himself) invites spending without restraint. Efforts to compensate for manpower shortages with intricate automated systems mean that the sheikhdoms often receive state-of-the-art machinery that is especially likely to break down and requires expensive foreign technicians. Maintenance costs in the dry, dusty deserts far exceed those in more temperate climes. Repairs are almost unknown; broken parts are thrown away and replaced with spares, a ruinously expensive way to run a factory.

Inexpensive or even free petroleum will not offset all these costs, as foreign corporations seem to have concluded, judging by their reluctance to invest in the factories. Saudi Arabia lured Shell and Mobil into Yanbu only by offering access to 500 barrels of oil per day for each million dollars invested. An Arab-owned magazine published in London notes that "some Western oilmen see petrochemical joint ventures in the Gulf as nothing more than the price that has to be paid for secure supplies of crude [oil]." Far from producing income to replace falling oil revenues, these industrial white elephants will do well to break even; more likely, they will drain the treasury until they are abandoned.

Subsidies distort the economics of agriculture and animal husbandry even more drastically. Water and irrigation facilities are supplied by the state with scant regard for commercial feasibility. The Saudi government even pays air-freight charges to import cows from abroad. This help notwithstanding, food from the desert still costs about three times more than imports do; without lavish subventions, these sophisticated enterprises would revert to sand.

Many great fortunes are based on land speculation; real estate values have increased as much as 500 times since 1974. Andrew Duncan, in his book *Money Rush*, quotes a senior official of British Petroleum, who explained it this way: "The government is willing to pay so that the lads develop as entrepreneurs. In Kuwait, they did it by giving away bits of the desert and buying it back at exorbitant prices." One prince is reported to have made a $2 billion profit when he bought and sold open desert land in Jubail, the site of an industrial city; the profit on land bought and sold for the Riyadh airport is rumored to be $8 billion. (The true figures, even if only a fraction of these, would still mean extraordinary profits.) But because the land itself is not good for anything but sale, land values will shrivel to nothing when oil revenues decline.

WHAT DO STATIC or declining revenues mean for the sheikhdoms? How will they adjust?

A look at past spending habits may provide a clue to future actions. It was widely expected at the time of each price hike that the sheikhdoms would be unable to spend more than a fraction of the money they were about to receive. For example, in September of 1973, just before the Yom Kippur war, George W. Ball, former undersecretary of state, expressed concern about the ability of the Arab oil states to spend the revenues collected at $6 a barrel, calling these "very far in excess of their absorptive capacities." Yet today, oil sells at nearly six times this price, and the sheikhdoms' spending has increased proportionately. Indeed, the oil states have shown an unexpected talent for spending money. Every time revenues have increased, state expenditures have caught up in a short time. And this pattern has held true not only in the minor emirates but even in Saudi Arabia, the country most often thought to have "too much" money or "more money than it can absorb." Except after the great price rises in 1973 and 1974, spending increases by the Saudi government have lagged just slightly behind increases in oil revenues.

In theory, oil states could have spent less than they did, but pressures to use the money to increase welfare have been irresistible, as the fate of Abu Dhabi's sheikh, Shakhbut ibn Sultan, shows. Hoping to prevent oil revenues from reaching his subjects and upsetting their way of life, Shakhbut hid the cash received from oil companies under his bed; when mice ate some of it, he put the rest in the bank. But still he refused to spend it, saying, "I am a Bedou. All my people are Bedou. We are accustomed to living with a camel or a goat in the desert. If we spend the money, it is going to ruin my people, and they are not going to like it." By 1966, Shakhbut's penny-pinching provoked his overthrow; understandably, no other oil-rich ruler has sought to emulate him.

Must state spending inexorably rise with revenues? Are the sheikhdoms locked into ever-higher spending, or do they have room in which to maneuver? If state spending is flexible, declines in revenue can be endured; if not, they may undermine social and political stability, and possibly lead to the collapse of the present regimes and to the disruption of oil supplies.

Already, profligacy in the sheikhdoms has—unlikely as this sounds—occasionally generated budget deficits. For example, when Saudi income remained constant during 1977–1979, government spending exceeded oil sales. Knowing that revenues subsequently rose much higher, one is inclined to dismiss these deficits as curious aberrations, but in 1977 and 1978, nobody knew that the Shah would fall and that revenues would soon increase by so much. Despite all efforts to reduce spending (including a draconian order to government agencies to spend no more than 70 percent of their original allocations), the Saudi government could not cut back enough, and it ran a deficit. It seems likely that the same problem will arise any time that revenues stop growing.

Most observers are optimistic, however, arguing that state spending in the sheikhdoms can level off or decline without causing irreparable damage. Noting the waste that characterizes OPEC spending, they claim that many expenses—foreign aid, military procurements, industrialization, agriculture, building projects, subsidies, corruption—can be eliminated without creating undue hardships. These optimists sometimes point to last year's spending cuts in the United States and ask why the sheikhdoms can't do as well when their turn comes.

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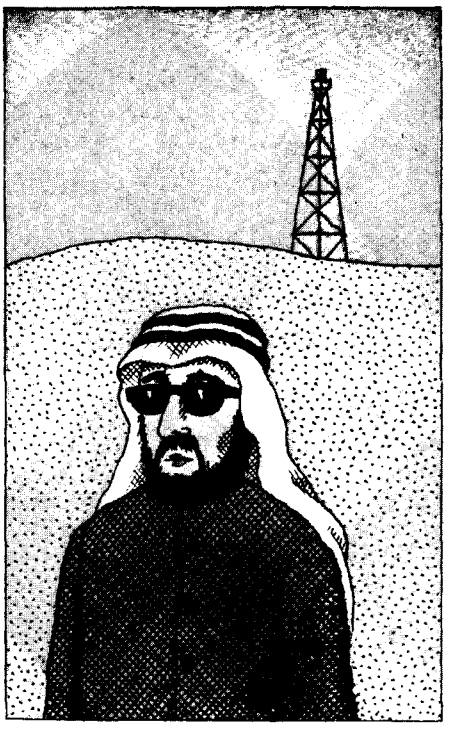
Predictions of the sheikhdoms' economies cannot be based on the behavior of the American economy, because the sources of wealth are fundamentally different: America produces its own wealth, whereas the sheikhdoms consume the wealth of others. President Reagan's goals are modest compared with expected reductions in the sheikhdoms. To begin with, there are fewer beneficiaries of U.S government aid and they get less support. Taxpayers outnumber welfare recipients in the United States, so spending cuts win widespread approval. In the sheikhdoms, where no one pays more than nominal taxes, everybody would lose if the government cut back. In the U.S., Republicans argue that tax relief will create a larger pie, eventually benefiting everyone, even those thrown off government support; the Arab states, however, would have to divide a smaller pie. Also, the American debate concerns a deceleration of growth, not absolute reductions, as in the Middle East. Thus, while cuts in federal spending have many political attractions in the U.S., they have none at all in the sheikhdoms.

The sheikhdoms have made some efforts to reduce state expenses through retrenchment. Saudi authorities have reached the point of discussing the unheard-of idea of making customers pay for services such as water, electricity, garbage removal, and telephones; the finance minister of Kuwait has suggested the need for "fine tuning in national priorities" and the postponement of public projects; this past April, the finance minister of the United Arab Emirates announced a 57.8 percent reduction in his country's foreign-aid program. But these gestures do not much disturb the people's expectations of riches and well-being, and therein lies the tragedy of the oil boom: not only has it harmed the industrial nations and brought suffering to poor countries but its most devastating impact, which has not yet been felt, is reserved for the apparent beneficiaries.

THOSE WHO SUPPOSE that the sheikhdoms can reduce state spending without dangerous consequences ignore the intricacies of distribution and the power of vested interests. Abandoning programs developed during the past decade would precipitate general discontent; this holds true even for commitments that appear superfluous. Rulers have their own priorities, the wealthy



elite have others, and the citizenry and foreign labor still others. Their interests clash, and each group will resist attempts to cut its favored programs.

Rulers buy themselves a significant place in world politics by lending money, giving aid, sponsoring political movements, and building military forces. Saudi and Libyan leaders have shown special skill at making their views known around the world; visitors to Riyadh in 1976 included twenty-three heads of state, nineteen prime ministers, thirty foreign ministers, and seventy-eight other ministers. The people gain little from this power, however, and will press for money to pay for housing and rice. But will the Saudi king, who travels inside the country with a retinue numbering 1,800 persons, cut back for them?

Possessing sophisticated tanks and aircraft brings psychological rewards that defy rational calculation; besides this, the armed forces protect the ruler. So, too, industrialization has prestige value; aluminum and petrochemical plants allow the leaders to claim that they are members of the club of industrialized nations. The belief that the desert factories can turn a profit if properly managed will probably persist, causing the sheikhdoms to spend still more money on them. As for the agricultural projects, they bestow less prestige than industry but provide some security against food boycotts, and so these likewise will not be readily abandoned.

Internally, the rulers use their money as a means of maintaining political power; in the topsy-turvy world of the sheikhdoms, governments tax few but distribute money to all. Therefore, the rulers' hold on their states lies largely in their ability to pay out. Easy money reduces tensions and keeps the opposition fragmented. The Saudis increased funds to rural areas by 20 percent after the siege in Mecca, expecting this to quiet discontent. Colonel Qaddafi ensures his power by lavishing payments on the army. The Shah tried this too, but when oil revenues were stagnant for too long, previously papered-over problems abruptly emerged. Tribes, minorities, leftists, soldiers, religious activists, Westernized city dwellers, regional separatists, displaced farmers, and migrant workers will all challenge governments in the sheikhdoms as spending decreases.

Professionals and businessmen also live in an unreal world. Most sheikhdoms require local sponsorship of foreign enterprises, and in return for signing his name, a Saudi extracts a large percentage of profits. Agents' fees have created extraordinary opportunities for the well-connected; Muhammad ibn Fahd, son of Saudi Arabia's effective ruler, has been associated with many multinational concerns (Bechtel, Mobil Oil, Philips', the Dutch electronics firm, and ENI, the state-owned Italian energy company) and is reputed to have amassed a personal fortune of more than a billion dollars by representing these firms in his country.

Corruption of this sort flourishes in all the sheikhdoms; its elimination would appear to be an easy way to reclaim funds for productive use. But corruption on a grand scale serves an important function: it funnels funds from the state to the elite. According to the senior official of British Petroleum interviewed by Andrew Duncan, "The authorities have taken the view that commission is a way of spending oil revenue. . . . You have to have some mechanism, other than the dole, for pushing money around." When the state permits inflated agents' fees or buys land at exorbitant rates, it transfers wealth; does it matter that this is done surreptitiously and not through more formal channels? If graft were to be eliminated, the government would have a disgruntled elite to contend with.

Government spending sustains local commerce; according to one estimate,

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60 percent of private business in Saudi Arabia is funded directly by the state. In addition, the government frequently rescues failed businesses. Public construction projects keep many concerns going—cement factories, labor contractors, import firms, wholesalers, lawyers, agents, and others. Citizens who involve themselves in business profit from a wide array of advantages underwritten by the state: cheap land, interest-free loans, customs and duty exemptions, tax holidays, and freedom from personal income taxes. In a post-boom environment, businessmen accustomed to such pampering are not likely to survive on equal terms with their non-subsidized competitors. They are sure to resist any attempts to trim state projects.

MOST PEOPLE IN Saudi Arabia live with their animals and in-laws in drab, pre-fabricated apartment buildings on treeless streets. They are not rich by Western standards. With the exceptions of Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, where per capita incomes exceed $18,000 and $24,000, respectively, the standard of living throughout the sheikhdoms remains surprisingly low. Half the Saudi population eats little meat and lives in unsanitary housing; more than three quarters are illiterate; disease is rampant, infant mortality is high, and life expectancy is low. Saudi oil revenues are about $15,000 to $20,000 per capita, but personal income is only a fraction of this; most of the revenues go for foreign labor, foreign goods, and foreign investments. Prices far exceed those in the West, further diminishing real income; a United Nations report recently found living expenses in Saudi Arabian cities to be among the highest in the world.

To mitigate the high cost of living, the government provides a wide range of subsidies not only to members of the elite but also to ordinary citizens. The state pays premium wages and collects minimal rents on its properties. It sells goods, especially food, at below cost, and charges only a fraction of the market price for energy. Bus and plane fares are subsidized. The state covers medical expenses and student fees, and assists almost every commercial or agricultural venture with inexpensive land and interest-free loans. The Saudi government even helps young couples to marry, by paying $7,000 toward a woman's bride-price. (To qualify for this, a man must prove Saudi citizenship, an inability to pay on his own, and a good record of attendance at the mosque.) In just a few years, citizens have come to depend on subsidies to smooth the way for virtually every endeavor. They too may turn against the government if the supports are withdrawn.

(This is what happened in Iran. Although Iran is not one of the sheikhdoms—its population and cultural resources far exceed theirs, and its per capita oil income hardly compared—still, the country was transformed by wealth much as the sheikhdoms have been. The oil bonanza brought inappropriate industries, bloated armed forces, food imports, and consumeritis. It bestowed unprecedented power on the central government and upset traditional life. Oil revenues jumped from $5.6 billion in 1973 to $22 billion the next year, but then stagnated, and in real terms declined, for five years, until the 1978 revolution. Predictably, tensions grew as oil income contracted; when prospects for self-improvement faded, merchants, students, day laborers, oil workers, and even religious officials felt the pinch and took part in anti-Shah activities.)

Foreign workers are perhaps the greatest potential source of danger for the sheikhdoms. Aliens make up about 60 percent of the population in Kuwait, 40 percent in Saudi Arabia, and 85 percent in the United Arab Emirates. They constitute 75 percent of the labor force in Kuwait, 60 percent in Saudi Arabia, and 96 percent in the United Arab Emirates. Industrial complexes in the Persian Gulf, in fact, have been known to employ workers from more than a hundred nations.

Some foreigners—Westerners and East Asians, especially—take jobs in the sheikhdoms just to make quick money, and stay for only short periods. Disdainful of their hosts' culture, irritated by civic and religious restrictions, and unused to the blistering heat, about a third of them leave before their contracts expire. Other foreign workers, usually Moslems, accommodate better; they view the sheikhdoms as the promised land, and many try to settle in them permanently. Their religious and cultural ties lead them to believe that they should have rights equal to those of native citizens. Arabs feel this most strongly, but so do Pakistanis, Turks, and other Moslems.

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With rare exceptions, however, foreign workers cannot become citizens (in Saudi Arabia that requires a special royal decree) and do not enjoy the easy life of the native-born. They earn lower wages, lack full legal rights, and are excluded from the political process. On one occasion, the Saudi government gave its Saudi employees a 50 percent raise but left the non-Saudis' salaries unchanged. Citizens alone enjoy most of the subsidies noted above, and they alone may practice law, own land, or open a business. A Saudi citizen has free access to some of the most advanced medical facilities in the world; a foreign worker pays for his health care and is not allowed to be treated in the better hospitals.

In Kuwait, a foreign worker who retires must leave the country. According to traffic regulations broadcast on Kuwaiti television, when two cars meet at an intersection, a Kuwaiti citizen has right-of-way over a foreigner. Citizenship is a closed caste.

Thus discriminated against, the Moslem expatriates in particular resent the native-born, who do so little work themselves yet resist pressures to share the bounty more equally. Lacking political representation, foreign workers will probably be the first to suffer as oil sales decline, and they may not do so passively. In early 1981, groups of foreign workers professing radical leftist ideology surfaced almost simultaneously in most of the sheikhdoms.

Enough Yemenis, Egyptians, Jordanians, and other workers have moved to the Persian Gulf and Libya that their homelands suffer manpower shortages. North Yemen, for example, has so few farmers left that the country has begun to import much of its food. In Pakistan, the privilege of sending workers abroad has become a source of dispute between regions. On paper, remittances sent home look good for the economy, but two thirds of the money goes to buy land and consumer goods; rarely is it invested productively. When the boom ends and foreign workers return home, remittances will drop, unemployment will soar, and serious financial hardship will result. In this way, poor neighbors, too, will experience the curse of oil wealth.

—Daniel Pipes

Daniel Pipes, a historian at the University of Chicago and author of Slave Soldiers and Islam, *spent four years in the Middle East.*

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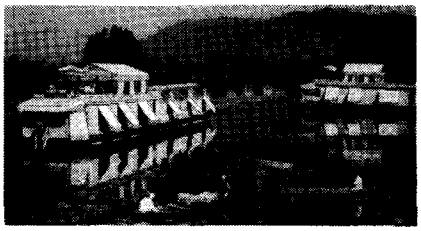

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Women on the Bench

A woman named Esther Morris, a non-lawyer, became the first of her sex to join the judiciary in this country when the governor of the Territory of Wyoming appointed her a part-time justice of the peace in a place called South Pass Mining Camp. The year was 1870.

Fully half a century elapsed before a woman was elected, rather than appointed, to a judicial position other than justice of the peace. Up until the last decade, only a handful of women had ever served as judges.

No longer are women a token presence on the bench. They are now being elected or appointed to judgeships in increasing numbers. Albeit in a minority that's still disappointingly small, they are a significant and growing force in both the state and federal judiciaries. The most prominent, of course, is Sandra Day O'Connor, who joined the U.S. Supreme Court in 1981.

More and more women will move into judgeships in the years ahead as their ranks in the law expand. In 1910 only 1% of all the lawyers in this country were women. Some 60 years later, the proportion was still below 3%. But by 1980 about 13% — nearly 59,000 — of the lawyers in the U.S. were women. If current trends continue, one-third of our lawyers will be women by the year 2000. An ever-larger pool is being formed to draw on for female judges.

What kind of women don judicial robes? *Judicature,* the journal of the American Judicature Society, recently published a profile based on returns from questionnaires distributed to all 549 female lawyers who were sitting as state court judges in late 1980.

The typical woman jurist at the time was 48 years old, white, a Democrat of moderate to liberal bent, who had served on the bench for six years and had been a lawyer for 13. After attending a private law school, she practiced with a small law firm. Most likely she first became a judge by filling an unexpired term through a gubernatorial appointment on recommendation of a nominating commission. She went on to win additional tenure by popular election.

Debate in some legal and affirmative action circles revolves around the more effective means of selection — appointment or election — for placing more women on the bench. Many organizations representing women's interests prefer electoral over appointive selection. Yet most women judges themselves believe an appointive system not only results in more women judges, but also produces a higher-quality judiciary.

The last decade has brought marked progress in women's presence on the bench. In 1971 fewer than 200 women lawyers were judges in state courts. By 1980 the number had nearly tripled. That's in addition to the numerous women non-lawyers sitting as limited-jurisdiction judges.

Until the late '70s, only eight women had served as federal district or appeals judges in the nation's entire history. President Carter alone appointed 41. President Reagan then named the first woman to the Supreme Court.

It took generations of effort to break down male bastions in the courtroom. Finally, women are achieving rightful prominence and participation in America's judicature. They are adding dimension and texture to deliberations and decisions. Their role, their contributions, and their influence can be expected to grow in the years to come.

UNITED TECHNOLOGIES

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Should we care what happens in El Salvador?
Yes, but not for the reasons offered by the administration

OUR REAL INTERESTS IN CENTRAL AMERICA

BY ROBERT A. PASTOR

ILLUSTRATIONS BY MARK HESS

IN EARLY FEBRUARY OF 1981, AS HE WAS DRAWING A line publicly in El Salvador, Secretary of State Alexander Haig privately sent a strongly worded message to Omar Torrijos, the head of the National Guard of Panama and the power behind the presidency. Haig let Torrijos know that the flabbiness in U.S. foreign policy had been firmed up; no longer would the U.S. government tolerate Torrijos's adventures with the Cubans. The goal of U.S. foreign policy in the hemisphere was now the containment of Cuba, replacing the half-dozen different goals that the Carter Administration had tried to pursue simultaneously. Torrijos would have to shape up, or else.

U.S. Ambassador Ambler Moss, Jr., was instructed to deliver the message to Torrijos immediately, and Moss helicoptered to the military barracks at Farallón. He found Torrijos in a hammock, swinging and meditating, and savoring his every puff of a Cuban cigar—a Cohiba, a personal present from Fidel Castro. Torrijos had not heard from Ronald Reagan since Reagan's inauguration; before that, Reagan had referred to him as "a tinhorn Marxist dictator," and Torrijos had reserved some choice quips for Reagan, "in the spirit of reciprocity," he liked to say.

"General," Moss said, "I have a message to you from Secretary of State Haig," and he then read the message.

Torrijos listened with no visible sign of emotion, except that he began puffing more rapidly on his Cohiba. When Moss was finished, Torrijos lifted himself out of the hammock, and asked if our ambassador would mind writing down his response. Moss took out his pad and pencil and Torrijos dictated:

"Mr. Haig, I cannot acknowledge receipt of this message. It was obviously intended for another destination. It should have gone to Puerto Rico. Omar Torrijos."

So much for the Big Stick in the 1980s.

Robert A. Pastor is a faculty research associate at the School of Public Affairs at the University of Maryland. He served as senior staff member responsible for Latin American and Caribbean affairs on the National Security Council from 1977 to 1981. He is the author of Congress and the Politics of U.S. Foreign Economic Policy.

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MUCH HAS CHANGED IN CENTRAL AMERICA since Teddy Roosevelt boasted that he had taken Panama. One change is that Central America, like the late Omar Torrijos, seems to be listening to us less, while we seem to be listening to Central America more—more intensely if not with more comprehension. Another change has occurred in the national interests of the United States: we have fewer vital interests in the region, but we seem to care about them more.

Last March, 792 foreign journalists, more than were in Vietnam during the height of the war, were in El Salvador to observe an election for a constituent assembly. The political, economic, and military turmoil in Central America—especially in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua—has been on the front pages of American newspapers and on the television news shows for months. Why are we so preoccupied with the crisis? Is all this attention justified?

Americans cannot help but ask whether El Salvador might not be better off if we were a little less possessive. If we are better off today by letting the Panamanians run the Canal, and we are, why wouldn't we be better off tomorrow if we let El Salvador be El Salvador? In short, why bother?

Before I attempt to answer these questions, I would like to consider briefly the origins of the Central American crisis.

Two rather simple explanations have been offered. In his speech at the Organization of American States (OAS), on February 24, President Ronald Reagan attributed the crisis to "imported terrorism," a "new kind of colonialism" that "stalks the world today and threatens our independence. It is brutal and totalitarian. It is not of our hemisphere but it threatens our hemisphere"; it is communism, and it is exploiting the economic crisis caused by the increase in the price of petroleum and the fall in the prices of the principal exports of the region—coffee, bananas, sugar, and cotton.

Mexico's President José López Portillo had offered a different explanation in a speech in Managua, on February 21: "The Central American and Caribbean revolutions are, above all, the struggles of poor and oppressed peoples to live better." While most of Reagan's explanation was aimed at Cuba as the source of the problem, López Portillo's speech didn't mention Cuba, except to suggest that it is one of the countries of the region "struggling to change domestic and foreign structures which very much resemble the colonial order." López Portillo did, however, mention the U.S. frequently, both by insinuation and by direct reference:

> I can assure my good friends in the United States that what is taking place here in Nicaragua, what is taking place in El Salvador, and what is blowing throughout the whole region, does not constitute an intolerable danger to the basic interests and the national security of the United States. What does constitute a danger [for the U.S.] is the risk of history's condemnation as a result of suppressing by force the rights of other nations.

One is reassured to learn from the White House press spokesman that the two Presidents hit it off so well together at their meetings last year. But after reading the two speeches given three days apart this year on the same subject and finding absolutely no conceptual overlap, one is left wondering whether their excellent relationship was brought about by conversing in different languages without the aid of an interpreter.

Which is it? Poverty and injustice, as the Mexican President suggests, or oil prices and Cuban terrorism, as the U.S. President maintains? A neat irony hides in their arguments.

If López Portillo is correct, then one might wonder why Mexico isn't in flames. It has one of the most inequitable income distributions in Latin America—worse than El Salvador's. (Indeed, in a report in 1979, the World Bank found an improvement in the distribution of income in El Salvador from 1965 to 1977—the lower 40 percent had increased their share of the economic pie, while the top 20 percent had reduced their share. The distribution was still grossly inequitable, but the trend was positive, which was not true in Mexico during the same period.)

If Reagan is correct, and all the trouble in Central America is caused by the Cubans and the Russians, why isn't similar mischief being made in the United States? The Cubans and the Russians have a far greater incentive to export their terrorism to the center of the empire. Why step on the emperor's toes, when you can plunge a dagger into his heart?

There is an alternative explanation: the instability of Central America stems from the region's socio-economic progress and political-military stagnation. (Access for all groups to the political process is one important reason Panama, Costa Rica, and Mexico have been able to escape the instability.) It is, of course, true that most of the people in Central America are poor, not just by U.S. standards but by world standards. The United Nations Economic Commission on Latin America estimates that 42 percent of the population in the six countries of Central America—Costa Rica, Honduras, Panama, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala—live in a state of "extreme poverty." The level of economic development ranges from Honduras, with a per capita income of $530, an adult literacy rate of 60 percent, and a life expectancy of fifty-eight years, to Costa Rica, with a per capita income of $1,820, an adult literacy rate of 90 percent, and a life expectancy of seventy years.

But what is most remarkable is not the poverty in the region, which has been its burden since the dawn of man, but the recent extraordinary economic growth. Between 1950 and 1978, the six nations averaged an annual real rate of growth of 5.3 percent, doubling the real per capita income during this period. This occurred despite the fact

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that the population nearly tripled, from 8.6 million to 23 million; without population growth, the per capita income would have quintupled.

Primarily banana or coffee exporters in 1950, the six nations have multiplied their trade by a factor of eighteen, and trade has been the stimulus for expanding and diversifying the entire economies. Exports now include a wide range of agricultural products, manufactures, and services. Physical infrastructure—roads, telephones, electrical energy, port facilities, mass communications—expanded severalfold. Just from 1960 to 1976, the adult literacy rate increased from 44 percent to 72 percent.

The changes in the societies wrought by this burst of progress were genuinely revolutionary. An enterprising middle and professional class emerged. There was an expansion of medium-sized, efficient agricultural units. A working class emerged, and organized in both the urban and the rural areas. The Church, which had legitimized the status quo for centuries, also underwent a profound transformation in this period, and many priests began to help and identify with the poor.

When the new groups sought political power commensurate with their new economic power, however, they found their path blocked by the old order. In 1972, rejecting the advice of his friends as well as his political enemies, Anastasio Somoza changed the Nicaraguan constitution and secured a second presidential term for himself. In the same year, the Salvadoran oligarchy colluded with the military and overturned an election won by a coalition that was led by Napoleón Duarte, of the Christian Democratic Party, and that included the Social Democratic and Communist parties. Two years later, a similar scenario was played out in Guatemala. In each case, the U.S. government winked as the democratic process was discredited. Human rights as a policy had not yet arrived; we confused the status quo with stability, and we are paying the price for that confusion today.

Guerrilla groups roamed the political landscape of Central America throughout the 1960s and 1970s. Cuban support varied, but was never extensive. Only in Guatemala in the late 1960s did the guerrillas represent a threat, and although some saw in this "another Vietnam," the movement itself was pushed back into relative isolation and obscurity.

There were three related developments in the 1970s that gave the guerrillas a chance to emerge from obscurity. First, the population explosion and increased educational opportunities provided the guerrillas with a new and educated leadership, more recruits, and a politically awakened population. The demographic profile is a critical starting point for understanding the current struggle in Central America, which pits not only old sources of power against new social forces but, more important, an older generation against a younger, better-educated one, representing larger numbers.

Second, the clogging of the political arteries in Nicaragua, in El Salvador, and to a lesser extent in Guatemala made the guerrillas the only opposition game in town. When the middle class was denied access to power, the guerrillas stole its reformist programs and by doing so enhanced their legitimacy and widened their base. The children of the middle class joined the revolution and persuaded their parents either to stay neutral politically or to front for the guerrillas.

Repression, which had long been the military's way to maintain order, became a counterproductive instrument; a younger population is not intimidated when the security forces slaughter a father or sister, it is politicized. The military thought they were killing the left, but in fact, they have been recruiting for it. The famed "muchachos" that made up the bulk of the Sandinista movement in Nicaragua and have expanded the guerrilla movements in El Salvador and Guatemala are the result of a collision between a younger demographic profile and a discredited militaristic approach to politics.

Finally, the rise in oil prices in 1979, followed by the collapse of the prices of sugar, coffee, bananas, and cotton, halted the economic growth and exacerbated unemployment in economies that already could not cope with an annual increase in the labor force of about 3 percent. The war between the military and the guerrillas spooked any further investment and prompted a transfer of capital from Central America to the U.S.—currently estimated at more than $500 million annually, which is more than the U.S. aid program to the region. During the war, GNP fell by 25 percent in 1979 in Nicaragua, and by 9 percent in 1980 in El Salvador.

Population pressures, political obstructionism, military repression, and a severe economic depression—these are the medium- and long-term causes of instability; the tinder awaited the spark. The immediate cause of the current instability in Central America was the Nicaraguan revolution, which traumatized the region. The left became bolder, the right more intransigent, and the middle more precarious. Polarization—the process by which the middle is forced to choose sides, flee, or die—gained momentum. Both the extreme left and the extreme right are committed to trying to make the political reality conform to their perceptions and propaganda—that there is no middle. The left claims that the choice is between the oligarchy and the people; the right, that it is between communism and Christian values. As the polarization process continues, it is natural for Americans to be drawn to original questions, such as what are U.S. interests in Central America, and do they justify our deep involvement?

It is unusual for an administration to ponder such basic questions, especially when it is taxed by international crises and endless bureaucratic debates. When an administration does address such questions, as it sometimes does in testimony before Congress or in speeches, it has no time to devise original answers, and so bureaucrats dust off traditional answers.

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INTERESTS

THE EXPLANATIONS THAT PRESIDENT REAGAN and Secretary of State Haig have offered for their policies in Central America certainly have the ring of history. "Make no mistake," Reagan said in February, "the well-being and security of our neighbors in this region are in our own vital interest." Why? "The Caribbean region is a vital strategic and commercial artery for the United States. Nearly half of U.S. trade, two thirds of our imported oil, and over half of our imported strategic minerals pass through the Panama Canal or the Gulf of Mexico." In the words of William Middendorf, the U.S. ambassador to the Organization of American States, the region is "right on our strategic doorstep." Middendorf argues that we should quit referring to the region as "in our own back yard"; instead, we should think of it as "our strategic front yard." In addition, the U.S. has economic and ideological interests, defined positively as a concern for freedom and democracy, or negatively as anti-communism. These answers have sustained U.S. engagement in the region since the turn of the century, but they are no longer convincing.

Merely to list these interests is to understand why the Reagan Administration has been having so much difficulty persuading the American people that a decisive battle is being fought in Central America. A "vital interest" is presumably one for which the U.S. is willing to fight. In 1914, the U.S. occupied the port of Veracruz, Mexico, to gain respect for the American flag. In 1916, the U.S. fought to ensure that customs taxes would be collected in the Dominican Republic. In 1927, U.S. troops died to ensure a free election in Nicaragua. Not only would few Americans consider any of these interests vital today but it would be hard to identify a consensus in the U.S. around *any* interest that would justify unilateral U.S. military intervention in Central America; in a recent poll published by the *Washington Post*, 70 percent of Americans said they would oppose any fighting by the U.S. in El Salvador. Our interests are not immutable; they have changed as the world and our capabilities have changed. Moreover, new administrations often attach very different weights to each interest; to see this, one need only compare the importance that the past three administrations have given to U.S. national interests in human rights abroad.

There is no better example of the changing character of U.S. interests and the implications of the change for U.S. strategy than the Panama Canal, which has been the symbol of U.S. interests in Central America since the turn of the century. Even today, there are many who believe that the principal reason for preventing instability in the rest of Central America is that the Canal must be protected, lest a hostile neighbor interfere with its traffic. Through World Wars I and II, the Canal was an invaluable strategic asset, but with the advent of aircraft carriers, which were too large to pass through the Canal, U.S. interests in it changed—from strategic to primarily economic, from facilitating the movement of the U.S. fleet to providing a marginal economic advantage in the shipment of supplies. U.S. interests in an open and efficient Canal remained important, but they could hardly be considered either vital or strategic. At the same time, the Canal became vital for countries such as Panama, Ecuador, Colombia, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica, which shipped much larger percentages of their trade through it. Closure would only marginally affect the U.S.; it would be catastrophic for these countries. The new Canal treaties between the U.S. and Panama ratified in 1978 reflected these changing interests and the necessity of a new approach to protect these interests.

LET'S LOOK AT THE INTERESTS OFFERED BY THE ADministration to justify U.S. involvement in Central America.

First, U.S. *economic interests* in the region are currently marginal—less than 2 percent of U.S. investments abroad are in Central America and less than 2 percent of our trade is with the region. Moreover, the long-standing fear that the establishment of Communist regimes would close the "open door" of Western trade and investment has been questioned by none other than David Rockefeller, who recently returned from a trip to Africa and declared that Americans could do business with the Communist regimes there if the U.S. government would let them.

While an impressive quantity of U.S. trade flows through the region, what country would seriously consider either trying to sink U.S. vessels or closing one of the strategic sea lanes? Certainly, the Cuban leadership understands that to do so would provide the U.S. government with the kind of pretext to punish Cuba militarily that many nationalist Americans have been seeking for the past twenty years.

As long as we support the principle of freedom of the seas, the Soviet navy will be able to conduct regular naval maneuvers in the Caribbean as it has done since 1969. One Cuba is more than adequate to service the needs of the Soviet fleet in the Caribbean. (A facility on the Pacific side of Central America, where there is less traffic, would be another matter.) Soviet interference with our shipping is unlikely short of a nuclear exchange, which would make

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any further discussion irrelevant. Even if there were a conventional war with the Soviets, it is unlikely that Cuba or other Soviet allies in the Caribbean would risk interfering with U.S. shipping, because of their extraordinary vulnerability to U.S. retaliation. Anyway, not much could be done that we aren't already doing to make the sea lanes less vulnerable. Undoubtedly, the Pentagon will insist on building up its capabilities in the Caribbean and will argue that an increased Cuban military buildup requires still larger budgets, though the threat is not directly against the U.S. but rather against other sovereign nations in the region, which have the option of turning to the OAS or the U.S. for defense if they feel the need.

That is not to suggest that we have no *security interests* in the region, only that traditional exhortations about strategic arteries or Soviet bases or expanded military capabilities in surrogate Cubas don't strike the same chord in Americans that they once did. This is because the administration's case against the Soviet threat to this hemisphere is a caricature, based on three exaggerated assertions.

First, the administration argues that the guerrillas fighting in Central America are merely tools of the Soviet Union and Cuba. Reagan told the *Wall Street Journal* during the presidential campaign that the Soviet Union is the source of all instability in the Third World. In warning Cuba to stop fomenting insurrection throughout Central America, Secretary Haig said: "It is our view that this is an externally managed and orchestrated interventionism, and we are going to deal with it at the source."

Haig's assertion has met with incredulity in the U.S. and Western Europe, and he has sought repeatedly to substantiate the charge. On March 2, he announced that he had "overwhelming and irrefutable" proof that El Salvador's guerrillas are operating under instructions sent to them from a command-and-control center outside the country. Since he has not shared that proof, it is difficult to judge except to say that it is apparently refuted by the uncoordinated operations of the five guerrilla groups, even with respect to the election—with some groups trying to sabotage it violently, others encouraging a boycott, and still others doing nothing. Moreover, if the U.S. had located a command-and-control center, presumably the Salvadoran government would have beaten the guerrillas in every confrontation since then, because they would have had access to the guerrillas' strategic plans and instructions. (Conversely, if the guerrillas intercepted cable traffic between the State Department and our embassy in San Salvador, they might conclude that the Salvadoran government gets its instructions from a command-and-control center outside the country.)

This caricature of the guerrillas as tools only invites people to embrace a mirror-image caricature of the guerrillas as a wholly indigenous and autonomous response to decades of oppression and repression. The second caricature obscures the political, military, and ideological links between Central American revolutionaries and the Soviet Union and Cuba and the extent to which the guerrilla leaders look to Castro's Cuba as a political and military, if not an economic, model and at the U.S. as the source of all their nations' problems. (It is true that the left is quite heterogeneous, including disaffected Social and Christian Democrats in El Salvador, for example, but the guerrilla leaders with the guns do not hide their Marxism-Leninism in interviews with the Mexican and Cuban press, although they do sound more like Social Democrats when interviewed by American reporters.) Surely, a more realistic appraisal of the guerrilla movements in Central America would recognize their indigenous roots and their ideological branches, their idealistic motives and their hunger for power by force of arms, their professed interest in "democracy" and their own authoritarian organizations, their concern about social injustice and their belief in the class struggle, their admiration for Cuba and their obsessive hatred for "U.S. imperialism."

Second, the administration suggests that the emergence of "new Cubas" in Central America constitutes a security threat to the U.S. and, in Haig's words, "a profound challenge to the security of our hemisphere, to the whole character of the southern hemisphere, its political orientation and its compatibility with traditional hemispheric values." Leaving aside the question of what values unite President Pinochet, of Chile, Castro, and President Herrera Campins, of Venezuela, the problem with this assertion is that the American people find it easier to visualize Central America as composed of six relatively poor and weak countries with a justifiable preference to be viewed in their own terms rather than as kings or pawns in a global chess game.

The administration made a point of the fact that the person who briefed the press on March 9 on the Nicaraguan military buildup was the same person who had briefed on the Cuban missile crisis. The implication—that the military buildup constituted a security threat to the U.S., perhaps equivalent to the installation of Soviet missiles in Cuba—is absurd, either from a strategic perspective or from the standpoint of a possible effect on global perceptions of U.S. power. With slide shows depicting the threat in such unrealistic and melodramatic terms, the administration repeated the mistake of its first assertion, and the result is that people are driven again to a mirror-image caricature, which suggests that *no* security interests are at stake.

Nicaragua's neighbors do have grounds for fearing that country's military buildup, but not because Nicaragua will invade, which would probably provoke an OAS response. When combined with Nicaragua's support for insurgencies in neighboring countries, the increased military capability acts to deter any neighbor from "hot pursuit." The U.S. is not the appropriate country and the State Department is not the appropriate forum, however, to make the case on Nicaragua's military buildup; the evidence should have been presented by Central American governments, with

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U.S. assistance, before the OAS, where a multilateral response could be requested.

The establishment of a Soviet base that could be used to threaten other countries or even the U.S. is a legitimate security concern, and a nation in the region that was on a collision course with the U.S. would certainly have an incentive to issue an invitation to the USSR, much as Cuba did in 1962. From a U.S. perspective, the issue is how to minimize the chance of this happening, and there are two ways: reduce the probability of Marxist-Leninists coming to power in the region who would look to the USSR and Cuba for security support, or try to reduce the level of hostility with such groups if they do come to power. Although some have referred to this concern with the possible emergence of hostile regimes as a presumption of U.S. hegemony or imperialism, in fact the concern is shared by all governments of the region, whether of the right, the left, or the center. However, this concern must be kept in perspective. The emergence of a hostile regime is primarily a regional problem affecting *important* U.S. interests, but it isn't one that alters the global strategic balance and threatens *vital* interests.

The administration's third assertion is that the choice for Central America is, in President Reagan's words, between "two different futures"—a positive, democratic one and a negative, Communist one. Would that it were so. Though the phrases are reminiscent of the Truman Doctrine of thirty-five years ago—and, unfortunately, of equal subtlety—the American people are not as trusting as they were then nor as ignorant of the real choices we face in Central America. As the U.S. retreats from its defense of human rights, the black-and-white choices begin to blur into one another. The Marxist future in Central America—at least as it has evolved in Nicaragua thus far—is simply not as dark as the administration would have us believe, and the possibility of a democratic future for El Salvador and Guatemala can hardly be considered bright.

It is precisely because the likely alternatives are not very attractive that some Americans are driven to the idea that there is *no* choice. Others feel that the dissolution of the old oligarchical structure can present an opening for greater freedom and justice, and that it's a mistake to believe that if the left comes to power, it cannot be co-opted. Of course, U.S. policies can make revolutionaries either a little more or a little less hostile, but the probabilities argue against the chances of converting those Marxist-Leninist guerrillas, who have been fighting U.S. imperialism for a decade or so, into either democrats or friends of the U.S.

In the search for a relevant answer to the old strategic question, we have ricocheted between two caricatures—one suggesting that our most vital security interests are at stake, and the other, that there are no objective security interests, only errant perceptions based on a lingering desire for hegemony. In assuming that the insurgencies are not nationalistic movements but rather tools of the Soviets and therefore fixed in their hostility to the U.S., that the cause of the instability is external, that the only struggle in Central America is against the left, the Reagan Administration distorts the struggle into a confrontation with the USSR and invests the prestige of the U.S. in the outcome, over which we have considerably less than complete control. Moreover, the strategy of bringing the full weight of the U.S. against the insurgents is counterproductive, because it provides the right with a blank check to be intransigent and repressive in its war against communism and the left with a target that it can use to establish its nationalist credentials.

Those who would withdraw from Central America because they don't perceive any security interest either don't see or don't care about the covert extension of Cuban influence on behalf of Marxist-Leninist revolutionaries, or don't want to do anything about rightist terrorism, or don't think we can do anything. But they should understand that the consequence of withdrawal would be the intensification of the struggle; the right would be unshackled, and the Communist supporters of the left would be less inhibited in transferring weapons.

THE QUESTION OF NATIONAL-SECURITY INTERESTS returns at one point or another to the question of U.S. *ideological interests*—human rights, democratic government, a pluralistic and open international system. "International terrorism will take the place of human rights in our concern," Haig said on January 28, 1981; by this deliberate act of unilateral disarmament, the Reagan Administration not only deprived the U.S. of one of the most powerful weapons in its ideological arsenal but also betrayed U.S. history and values and placed itself in opposition to a vigorous transnational human-rights movement. It is a mistake to view our security and human-rights interests as contradictory; they are mutually reinforcing. Let me illustrate this point with two sets of examples. In the early 1970s, U.S. preoccupation with stability led us to ignore the discrediting of the democratic process in Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala, and the entire region is suffering because of the closing of those political avenues. In 1978, the U.S. placed its full weight behind democracy in Honduras and Panama, and that weight contributed to restraining the military in both countries, which are now relative paragons of stability.

Jeane Kirkpatrick, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, argues that the U.S. should have openly supported Somoza in Nicaragua, because the Sandinistas are worse. That same logic would lead us to resist all changes and to embrace all dictators—since the alternatives are almost always more uncertain. The Nicaraguan people had a lot more to say about whether Somoza remained in power than did the U.S., but even if the U.S. had had the choice, and backed Somoza, not only would we have backed a loser but we would have tainted our nation's values perhaps ir-

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revocably in the area. Nothing would have weakened the U.S. security position more than to have gone down with Somoza.

What kind of system of government do we want our friends to live under? Certainly the U.S. cannot be silent on this question, and the answer must be some form of democracy, in which human rights are respected. We cannot ensure that democracy will take root everywhere, but we should never uproot it if it does, and we should use whatever influence we have to increase its chances by trying to assist those who would support social justice, restrain rightist repression, and offer an alternative to Marxist-Leninist revolutionaries. We can neither walk away from such a struggle nor take sides with the right against the left.

The U.S. also has *systemic interests* in contributing to a world economic and political system that is open and pluralistic. In Central America, this means that it is in the long-term interests of the U.S. to encourage greater independence and autonomy, since these would permit more balanced and respectful governmental relationships. Of course, this particular interest is generally eclipsed during a political crisis, when it is more important for the U.S. to try to influence internal political developments, but it is a mistake to ignore it totally. U.S. strength is derived from its respect for political diversity abroad and at home. We have an interest in influencing developments in Central America but not in dominating those countries as the Soviet Union dominates Eastern Europe. The U.S. would not be served by a Reagan Corollary to the Brezhnev Doctrine.

VIETNAM REDUX

LIKE THE AMERICANS WHO WENT TO PANAMA IN THE first decade of this century to dig a canal but brought back malaria, we have gone to El Salvador to save it from communism but have found ourselves infected by that country's disease, political polarization. Of course, in Central America, the people in the middle position are attacked with guns instead of placards, but the same principle—that the middle becomes more precarious as the contest becomes more intense—governs the struggle in El Salvador and the debate in the U.S. And increasingly, the two struggles parallel each other and are drawn to each other.

Why are we psychologically involved in El Salvador today? Geographical proximity and the administration's own highly charged rhetoric partly explain the intensity of the debate. The administration has defined the issues in black-and-white terms, and this promotes polarization in the U.S. and contributes to it in Central America. But there are two other reasons why the conflict in El Salvador has the potential for polarizing the U.S.: the psychological proximity of the Vietnam trauma and the "Caribbeanization" of the U.S.

Fighting a war always leaves deep imprints on a nation's consciousness, affecting its self-perception and the way it looks at the world for at least a generation. Certainly, World War II deeply affected an entire generation of Americans. Because U.S. involvement reflected so many of our nation's most valued myths—the U.S. as supporter of the underdog; war as a struggle between democracy and dictatorship; the necessity for unconditional victory—our nation emerged with a positive feeling of unanimity, assured of its rightness in fighting and its moral and physical strength in winning. After the war, it was relatively easy to transfer this perspective to a new enemy—the Soviet Union and communism.

The Korean War partly breached this consensual view. President Eisenhower sensed this and avoided involvement in Vietnam in 1954 because he realized that the American people were not yet prepared for "another Korea." More than a decade later, however, the total breakdown of the World War II consensus occurred in Vietnam, which divided the nation then and continues to divide it today. There is agreement that it was a mistake, but that is where the consensus ends. Two views of the Vietnam conflict seem particularly relevant to El Salvador.

The first view—that U.S. leaders lacked the will to win—was articulated by President Reagan in February of 1981, in a ceremony to present the Medal of Honor to a Vietnam war hero. Reagan said that U.S. military forces were withdrawn "because they'd been denied permission to win." Although this view appears to be shared by his secretaries of state and defense, there does not appear to be a consensus on its implications for Central America. The Defense Department appears to be reluctant to get involved militarily in the absence of broad national support, while Secretary of State Haig apparently believes that if the U.S. is to play its proper role in the world, we need to get over the Vietnam syndrome and demonstrate our resolve for both friends and adversaries. This explains why Haig was so eager to make El Salvador the key test for U.S. foreign policy; it was close to home and presumably an easy win. Of course, it didn't develop as he intended, but there is no indication that he has been diverted from a belief that the U.S. must demonstrate a willingness to apply force—as the Soviet Union has done either directly or by proxy in at least six instances since the U.S.

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withdrew from Vietnam—or U.S. diplomacy will become less credible. According to this view, there is no reason to re-arm America if the rest of the world doesn't believe that the U.S. has the will to use the arms.

Before Congress last March, Secretary of State Haig said that the problem in Vietnam was that the government had failed to decide whether or not our vital interests were involved. "If they had concluded negatively, then we would never have become involved in the first instance," he said. If they had decided our vital interests were at stake, "I believe they would have taken actions commensurate with that judgment. . . . Now, let me tell you," he said, "I come down on the side of, in such an assessment in Central America, that the outcome of the situation there is in the vital interest of the American people and must be so dealt with. . . . I know the American people will support what is prudent and necessary providing they think we mean what we mean and that we are going to succeed and not flounder as we did in Vietnam." In short, Haig was saying that the survival of the U.S. is at stake in Central America.

The White House reads the polls and knows how divisive is the conflict in El Salvador, and so the military option has not received any support. What the White House has apparently not recognized is that Reagan's use of the term "vital interest," as further developed by his secretary of state, commits the administration to stopping the left in Central America; the cost is irrelevant when the survival of the country is at stake.

Secretary of State Haig may be over the Vietnam syndrome because he never had it. But the view held by the majority of Americans, according to the polls, is that U.S. military involvement in a civil war like that of Vietnam is a mistake that shouldn't be repeated. The formative political experience of an entire generation—the baby-boom generation of the late 1940s and early 1950s—was marching against the war and turning the U.S. government around. In some ways, this was as heady an experience for this generation as winning World War II was for their parents. And just as the older generation enjoys recapturing the memory of its experience in movies or by marching in veterans' parades, the younger generation is ready to recapture its lost youth by marching against another war alongside a new generation ready to develop its own anti-war experience. This is part of the reason why the insertion of U.S. troops in Central America would divide America as Vietnam did.

For those whose views of the Vietnam War were shaped by watching it on television, the conflict in Central America promises to be much more riveting. Central America is more accessible, not just geographically but in its language and culture. Moreover, a large number of Central Americans are living in the U.S. today, and this helps people focus on the human consequences of the conflict.

Among journalists, there is a Vietnam generation ready to replicate the biggest story of the 1960s, and a new generation ready to cut its teeth on a new war. This partly explains why the coverage of the conflict has been so extensive, even though there are fewer than fifty U.S. military advisers in El Salvador; either the media are anticipating or they are trying to recapture the war of the past on a new battlefield. Their presence, however, serves the useful function of a self-denying prophecy; the more Americans focus on El Salvador, the more certain people are that they don't want to repeat Vietnam.

MUTUAL INTERVENTION

TO UNDERSTAND WHY THE STRUGGLE IN CENTRAL America matters to the U.S., one must go beyond the traditional questions and answers about U.S. interests and explore the psychological relationship between the U.S. and Central America. One finds that the U.S. is so much a presence in Central America that to debate nonintervention is to elicit utter bewilderment from Central American leaders. And in the evolving debate in the U.S., which has grown more intense and polarized, one finds for the first time that the region is beginning to exert a profound impact on the U.S.

Franklin D. Roosevelt became a hero to Latin Americans just for taking seriously the principle of non-intervention that Latin jurists and diplomats had been preaching to the U.S. for generations. The second U.S. President to take that principle seriously was Jimmy Carter, but Latin Americans reserved judgment on him, since they had heard other Presidents make the pledge and then break it. Only in Central America did they take Carter seriously; there, however, they feared that he might be true to his word.

In March of 1977, before a congressional committee, Napoleón Duarte, then in exile from El Salvador, asserted that the Carter pledge was not only irrelevant but immoral.

> . . . the U.S. cannot assume that it does not intervene, because even at this moment if the U.S. decides not to intervene at all, it will mean that it sustains the structure presently existing in Latin America; it will mean the continuing existence of all the dictators imposed on the people. Therefore, there is a continuing historical intervention . . . the U.S., at this moment, has a historical

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> duty . . . in support of those basic principles which form the basis of the so-called American way of life. . . . If the U.S. starts presenting its international policy based on moral principles, on the concepts and values of the American way of life, then there is hope that the world will find a new destiny, better than the one we are living in today.

Omar Torrijos, of Panama, put the same point a little differently: "General Brown [former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff] once told me that the U.S. cannot involve itself in the internal life of Latin America. I say, right . . . but the truth is that *our peoples feel that the U.S. is involved and even though you believe you are not involved*, the important thing is what our peoples think about you." Torrijos said that "the people of the Americas associate the Pentagon and the White House with the interests of the oligarchy and the interests of the armed forces. We are a nearsighted continent." If the U.S. is going to stand for democracy and social justice, it will have to move; to stand still is to reinforce an unjust status quo.

Mexico's great philosopher and poet Octavio Paz once wrote that North Americans "are always among us, even when they ignore us or turn their back on us. Their shadow covers the whole hemisphere. It is the shadow of a giant."

It is a presence that pervades Central America's politics, and that contorts the psychology of its leaders so much as to make it difficult at times for outsiders to understand what is happening. During the Nicaraguan insurrection, the Sandinistas repeatedly claimed that the U.S. was aiding Somoza, hoping that making such claims would further compromise the independence of Somoza and also embarrass the U.S., perhaps enough so that we would consider supporting them. At the same time, Somoza used the U.S. news media to claim that the U.S. was destabilizing him, hoping by such statements both to re-establish his independence and to press the U.S. to come to his support.

The only people in Central America who resolutely oppose U.S. involvement are those who are certain that the U.S. can't support them. Virtually everyone else tries to maneuver the U.S. into supporting them, and if they fail, they blame the U.S. for their problems. Even those who cannot decide what political path to follow blame Washington for neglecting to send a clear signal. The psychology of dependence is much more powerful than the reality.

Central Americans preach non-intervention but practice mutual interference. Ever since the Central American federation fragmented, in the early nineteenth century, a strong leader—a caudillo—has always consolidated power in one country and then tried to establish friends or overthrow enemies in neighboring countries. The U.S. has always been invited in by one side or the other or both. (A new element is that Central Americans now solicit the USSR and Cuba for military assistance and Western European governments and political parties for political support.) Even though U.S. troops have not fought in Central America since they were withdrawn from Nicaragua in 1933, the memory lingers. And even the most independent leaders—men who, like Torrijos or Somoza, appeared dependent on the U.S. but were actually manipulative—have always felt that their destinies were determined in Washington. Indeed, the greatest source of U.S. influence in the region remains the myth of control, the perception that the United States shapes all events.

U.S. influence in Central America is neither new nor news; what is both is Central America's influence on the U.S. After a century of trying to shape developments in the region, the U.S. for the first time is on the receiving end—and subject to a more subtle and pervasive process of change than the blunt instrument of U.S. diplomacy.

CARIBBEANIZATION

THERE IS A NEW, PROFOUND REASON WHY U.S. interests in Central America are permanent, not transitory: the United States is becoming a Caribbean nation. The character of American society is being subtly reshaped by the most enormous influx of migrants from a single region since the turn of the century, when nearly 9 million people arrived from Southern and Eastern Europe.

Since the 1965 amendment to the Immigration and Nationality Act liberalized entry to the U.S. from the developing world, the composition of the immigrant population has changed rather dramatically. From 1900 to 1965, 75 percent of all immigrants were of European extraction, whereas 62 percent of the immigrants since 1968, when the new law took effect, have been from Asia and Latin America. By 1980, about 85 percent of all immigrants and refugees were from these two regions, while fewer than 6 percent came from Europe.

Although the new immigrants came from more countries than at any previous time in our history, the largest source of immigrants was the Caribbean Basin—Central America, the Caribbean, and Mexico. Before 1960, less than 4 percent of U.S. immigrants came from the area. Since 1960, about a third of all immigrants to the U.S., two

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thirds of all political refugees, and nine tenths of all undocumented workers have come from the region. The total number of people who have come to the U.S. from the region is approximately 8.5 million—more than half of the people who have come to live in the U.S. since 1960. As the numbers from Southeast Asia decline, the percentage from the Caribbean Basin can be expected to increase even further.

In large part because of immigration, the Hispanic community has become one of the fastest-growing ethnic groups in the U.S., increasing from 9 million (or 4.5 percent of the population) in 1970 to 14.6 million (or 6.4 percent of the population) in 1980.

An examination of the social, demographic, economic, and political dynamics of the region leads to the inescapable conclusion that absent any new immigration law for the U.S., the flow will increase as dramatically over the next two decades as it has over the past two. The population of the region will nearly double by the end of the century. The economy of the region has progressed sufficiently to expose even poor Salvadorans to the material attractions of North America and to enable some of them to pay $1,000 to be smuggled into the U.S. But the economy has not been successful enough to provide jobs for a labor force expanding at 3 percent annually. Nor are the political institutions in the region flexible enough to channel the energies of a youthful and demanding population, almost half of whose members are under fifteen.

Until a few years ago, the vast majority of Basin immigrants came from Mexico and the islands in the Caribbean, but the recent political and economic turmoil in Central America has changed the composition of the immigration; most estimates now show an increasing proportion of political refugees and undocumented workers coming from Central America. El Salvador, with the highest population density in the region, was destined to become a major source of migrants even if there hadn't been a civil war. Some current estimates suggest that as many as 500,000 Salvadorans—more than 10 percent of the population—have come to the U.S. in the past three years. As many as 3,500 people every month may leave the violence of El Salvador, where at least 6,116 people were killed in 1981, for the peaceful environment of New York City, where only 1,826 people were murdered last year. And some estimates hold that 10 percent of the Nicaraguan population—about 250,000 people—have come to the U.S. in the past few years.

An increasing number of people considered migrating for economic reasons but were finally motivated to depart by political violence. These people have not only an additional reason to come but an additional excuse to stay—to claim asylum. Large numbers of such people can be expected from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua in the years to come, particularly because the members of the first enterprising wave have already settled and adjusted to the U.S. Families and almost entire villages have been transplanted from San Salvador to Washington and Chicago, from Managua to Miami, from Guatemala City to New Orleans; these communities serve as "transnational bridges" for bringing friends and relatives to the U.S., for finding them jobs and documents, and for easing their cultural adjustment.

The full impact of this new wave of migration has not been fully grasped, and indeed its effects will become apparent only over the next two decades. The new migration occurs at a time when the U.S. fertility rate is at a historical low. In a recent study projecting the impact of this new migration on the composition of the overall population, Leon Bouvier, of the Population Reference Bureau, estimated that if the current rates of fertility and immigration are maintained, 40 percent of the U.S. population a hundred years from now "will consist of post-1980 immigrants and their descendants."

During the next two decades, the concept of an "American" is likely to be changed as much as at any previous time in our history. Those looking for a snapshot of the entire Caribbean Basin region might well find it by looking at the changing face of the U.S. One will discover that Miami and Newark airports look more like those in San Juan and Mexico City than those in Columbus and Nashville. Or a Connecticut Yankee might be shown around Boston's Faneuil Hall district by a newly arrived Guatemalan taxi driver.

Many U.S. cities increasingly resemble the small nations of the area, not only in ethnic composition but also in economic structure. These cities suffer from a weak or declining industrial base and a top-heavy, inefficient public sector oriented more toward social services than toward productive investment. If we can share problems with the region, can we share solutions? The new ties among peoples of the region may soon lead us to such questions, if not to their answers.

WHILE SOME MAY DEBATE WHETHER THE U.S. IS the cause of the problems in Central America, it is a fact that the U.S. has come to share in the social consequences of political and economic instability in the region. The conflict in El Salvador is no longer a vague and abstract foreign-policy issue to be debated only at the State Department and in universities; it is a real and practical concern for the Department of Health and Human Services and for cities such as Miami, Los Angeles, Boston, and Chicago, which have to adjust their local services in a time of budgetary austerity to meet the growing needs of their Central American and Caribbean populations. Federal, state, and local governments spent about four times as much in resettling Cuban and Haitian "entrants" in 1980 as the U.S. spent in foreign aid to all of Latin America and the Caribbean that year.

Like all previous large migrations, the new wave from Central America, Mexico, and the Caribbean has stimu-

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lated some nativist fears and calls in Congress to limit the migration lest it lead to a problem of cultural and linguistic division comparable to the problem Canada has with Quebec. It is true that the foreign-born population has increased in the past decade to 6.2 percent after a steady decline since 1920, and that Spanish has become the second most-used language in American homes, but neither of these developments justifies any anxiety. Ninety percent of the people polled by the Census Bureau in 1980 spoke English in their homes, 5 percent spoke Spanish, and 5 percent spoke other languages. Unlike the French in Quebec, Hispanics are geographically dispersed, and although they may have a language in common, their nationalities and cultures reflect wide differences. Studies on acculturation and assimilation, although still quite preliminary, suggest that the new migrants are assimilating as rapidly as earlier migrants and that they recognize that their ticket to social and economic advancement in the U.S. is education and the English language. Moreover, as in past migrations, recent immigrants—as contrasted with refugees—utilize about the same number of social services and contribute as much to the economy as does the average U.S. citizen.

HOWEVER, THE FACT REMAINS THAT THE STRONGest nation in the world has been powerless to manage the flow of people across its southern border. Some of the weakest nations have found in this spontaneous and largely illegal flow a source of real power—an instrument for exporting unemployment (and in the case of Cuba, its "undesirables"), an independent source of foreign exchange and welfare payments (through remittances), a means to relax social pressures, and a means for their most pervasive impact on the U.S.

"We have lost control of our borders," warns Attorney General William French Smith. It is not the phenomenon of Caribbean Basin migration that is troubling Smith and most of the country but one dimension of it—illegal migration. In 1979 and again in 1980, about a million Mexicans were apprehended while trying to cross the border illegally. Each year, at least 500,000 people elude the border patrol or enter the U.S. legally and overstay their visas, and it is estimated that 90 percent of them come from the Caribbean Basin. Although Mexicans account for the largest single group, an increasing percentage comes from other nations in the region.

The U.S. government has been wrestling with this issue since the Ford Administration. When faced with a bill sent by President Carter, Congress dodged it and established a Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy to do a comprehensive and learned study. The distinguished commission, chaired first by Reubin Askew and then by the Reverend Theodore Hesburgh of Notre Dame, submitted its report with detailed recommendations and a suggested law to President Reagan. After another study, the Reagan Administration submitted legislation to Congress. Then, last February, Republican Senator Alan Simpson, of Wyoming, and Democratic Representative Romano Mazzoli, of Kentucky, after exhaustive hearings on all of the issues related to immigration and refugee policy, submitted another bill, which is almost a synthesis of the numerous proposals that have been offered but in many ways is the best of all of them and also the most likely to pass. The bill would penalize employers who hire illegal aliens; establish a worker-identification system; legalize immigration of 425,000 per year, excluding refugees; and double admissions from Canada and Mexico to a combined total of 40,000.

Like most issues before Congress, the illegal-migration issue is subject to lobbying by groups on both sides. Unique to this issue, however, is the fact that many people find themselves on both sides of it. Liberals are sympathetic to the plight of illegal migrants but also oppose their entry because it undermines organized labor. Conservatives favor the silent invasion because either they believe in a single labor market or they sympathize with those businessmen who can't find Americans to do the work, and they oppose illegal migration for fear that the U.S. is losing control of its borders and losing its Anglo culture. Conflicting emotions as well as conflicting interests have paralyzed the policy process.

That is the reason the U.S. has not stopped the illegal flow: it serves some U.S. economic interests, and we are of two minds about what to do about it. The "push" forces from the region explain why it continues. However, while illegal migration may serve everyone's short-term interest, it serves no one's long-term interest. The illegal flow is a problem for the migrant, who is subject to exploitation first by the smuggler who brings him and then by the employer, who often keeps the migrant's illegality secret for a price. It is a problem for the U.S. because it weakens respect for the law, undermines labor unions, and, in allowing the development of an underclass of people without rights, is contrary to U.S. values. And it is a problem for the sending country because a nation that exports its economic difficulties—whether rapid population growth or unemployment—has little incentive to solve them and because it is humiliating to a nation seeking to develop a sense of nationhood when its citizens volunteer for exploitation.

Civil-rights and Hispanic groups have tried to resist attempts by the U.S. government to deport illegal aliens, and there is no federal law prohibiting employers from hiring illegals. The principal flaw in the Simpson-Mazzoli bill is that it fails to take into account the new bonds connecting the U.S. to the region. If the bill becomes law, and sharply reduces illegal migration, as it is likely to do, the pressures caused by increased unemployment and returning workers will generate social and political tensions in Central America where they don't exist and exacerbate them where they do. We will find ourselves exchanging

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one end of the problem, illegal migration, for another end, more political instability. The Reagan Administration's Caribbean Basin Initiative could help address the broader problems of unemployment and economic development in the region, but only if it were more comprehensive and related more directly to the immigration issue than it now is.

Like members of the black community, Hispanics are mostly preoccupied by bread-and-butter domestic issues. The leaders of the community who care about foreign policy generally have views that range from virulent anti-communism to sympathy for the insurgents in Central America, with very little in between. The community in the U.S. therefore increasingly reflects the political polarization in Central America. The existence and influence of the community have heightened U.S. concern and interests in the region, but to the extent that the community's political views cluster around one ideological pole or the other, they have made a clear policy response more difficult to achieve.

Human-rights groups and the Catholic Church are playing increasingly important socio-political roles in Central America, helping the poor, the dispossessed, and the brutalized and giving them a voice and a haven in the U.S. Even if Americans were inclined to ignore the suffering in the region, the Church won't let us anymore, and that is to our nation's benefit.

Politically, the Church is as divided on Central America as our country is and almost as divided as is Central America, but those members of the Church who are opposed to repression appear the most vigorous and motivated. The White House has repeatedly been surprised by the large numbers of letters and telegrams from church groups urging the U.S. not to intervene in Nicaragua or to stop military aid to the Salvadoran government. The Church has become a political force to reckon with in Central America and in the U.S., and is strengthening the connection between the two of them.

The migration is slowly changing the way the U.S. looks at itself and at Central America and the entire Caribbean Basin. As the problems of Poland are felt more intensely by the American people because of the Polish-American community, or of Cyprus because of the Greek-Americans, or of the Middle East because of the Jewish community, and as earthquakes in Italy resonate through Italian neighborhoods in the U.S., so will the new immigrants from Central America force our nation to watch that region with more sensitivity and concern.

The U.S. will continue to have a major impact on Central America, but the nature of that impact will change as Central America's presence begins to be felt more directly in the U.S. Some of the most important U.S. interests in the world derive from the interests and concerns of our multi-ethnic population. The "Caribbeanization" of the U.S. may very well be one of our most compelling and enduring interests in Central America.

STRATEGY

ALTHOUGH OUR NEW, *IMPORTANT* INTERESTS appear to bring us to objectives—resisting the imposition of a hostile Marxist-Leninist regime, supporting democracy—similar to our old, *vital* interests, there is a key difference. In the past, we were seeking to defend in a foreign environment what we considered ours—whether the Panama Canal or U.S. investment. Today, with the increasing importance of nationalism in Central America and elsewhere in the developing world, and with the changing composition of U.S. interests, the U.S. is seeking to influence what it never can control—the political struggle in sovereign nations. The formulation of U.S. policy ought to follow logically from a definition of U.S. interests, but U.S. policy toward Central America is not made in a vacuum; it must operate within the constraints of U.S. capabilities and what is effective in Central America. I believe that we can exert our influence most successfully if our strategy takes account of the following points:

First, U.S. strength is demonstrated in the region not by military threats but by a willingness to negotiate legitimate concerns. Negotiations with Panama on new Canal treaties represented not a retreat of U.S. power but rather the preservation of U.S. interests in the Canal and an enhancement of U.S. legitimacy and influence in the area. In El Salvador, the left is not a unified, coherent Marxist-Leninist movement like that of the Viet Cong but rather a heterogeneous umbrella over five guerrilla groups, hundreds of political organizations, and disaffected Social and Christian Democrats. Sincere negotiations aimed at forging a democratic alternative would naturally separate those who are interested in democracy but want genuine guarantees if they are to participate in elections from those who are interested in imposing a Marxist-Leninist dictatorship.

Second, just as the way to protect the Canal was for the U.S. to relax, not tighten, its control, so too the way to win the struggle in Central America is for the U.S. not to fight it. Though Secretary Haig may believe that he obtains useful leverage by keeping all his options open, the unilateral use of U.S. troops is one option that should be ruled out, because it would be so internally divisive as to make the Vietnam demonstrations of the 1960s appear

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only a minor historical prelude to the anti-war riots of the 1980s. Moreover, U.S. troops would be landing not in the Central America of the 1930s but in the politically awakened region of the 1980s, provoking such a hostile nationalistic reaction that it would be the best gift we could ever give to the left. In short, we would lose both at home and abroad.

Third, the best way to defeat the Marxist-Leninist left in Central America is to break the hammerlock of the traditional power centers of the right. Central America is writhing in its struggle to free itself from a feudalistic past that is no longer acceptable to its expanding and demanding youthful population. The left feeds off the intransigence of the right and the repression of the military; the best way to reduce the support for violent revolution is to open the political channels for peaceful change.

Fourth, the best way to help the government in El Salvador is to be equivocal in our commitment. Secretary Haig's total support for the government in El Salvador is an inappropriate policy in Central America, where some of our enemies are potential allies and some of our so-called friends are really our enemies. By "drawing lines," Haig discarded the leverage necessary to influence the military to end the repression. In establishing its credibility against the Communists, the Reagan Administration lost its credibility against the right. The only way to restore credibility is to reduce support and aid.

Fifth, the best way to strengthen the enemy in the region is to confront him in a way that infringes on his sovereignty. Despite the unleashing of so many potent socio-economic forces in the twentieth century, the most awesome tool for mobilizing a population is still the old nineteenth-century idea of nationalism. A key concept that has apparently eluded some Americans is that the so-called retreat of U.S. power is the result not of diminution of U.S. will or capabilities but rather of the advancement of nationalism in the developing world. The days when the Marines could take over a Central American country or the CIA could overthrow one are long gone; their involvement now is more likely to produce the opposite of U.S. objectives, by providing our adversaries with the great energizer of nationalism.

Sixth, one way to elicit support in the region is for the U.S. to demonstrate respect and understanding for the almost desperate need in the region for reciprocity. One of the arguments against the Canal treaties was that if we gave in to Panamanian demands for the Zone, the Panamanians' demands would escalate, and soon they would try to throw out the U.S. military. The opposite happened. Military cooperation became so close that in August of 1980 Torrijos accepted a parachute-jump exercise seventy miles west of the Canal by the 82d Airborne. He set only one condition: reciprocity. And so, the same day, a Panamanian airborne company parachuted into Fort Bragg. "It was," Torrijos said with evident pride, "the first time Latin Americans ever practiced an invasion of the U.S." The U.S. can go a long way in the region by recognizing the need of unequals for equality.

The parting irony of the Panama Canal treaties is that Ronald Reagan now probably wishes that he had one to negotiate with each of the other Central American nations, to bring to them the stability that the treaties brought Panama. But, alas, the political instability in Nicaragua, Guatemala, and El Salvador, the uncertainty in Honduras and Panama, and the economic crisis in Costa Rica cannot be solved by a treaty. The crisis of Central America goes back at least a decade, but the solution that might have worked then—opening the political process to new groups and forces—is unlikely to be adequate today. Still, that is the first step.

The short answer to the strategic question is that U.S. interests demand that we seek to reduce the political polarization in Central America, because it affects us even as it divides our neighbors. In part because of the gradual conversion of the U.S. to a Caribbean nation, it is no more possible for the U.S. to ignore the struggle in Central America in the 1980s than it was possible for us to ignore our racial crisis in the 1960s.

The strategic challenge the U.S. faces in Central America is difficult precisely because it has less to do with traditional concepts of national security than previous challenges did, and much more to do with trying to influence the process of political change in a sensitive Third World environment. The time when the U.S. could bring political stability to the region is long past; all we can do now is contribute to the problem or to the solution. The U.S. can contribute to the problem by demonstrating an unwillingness to negotiate, an eagerness for unproductive threats and military confrontation, a penchant for military responses to political problems, a preference for unilateralism instead of regional cooperation. Or the U.S. can seek social and economic justice even as it resists communism, condemn human-rights violations even as it denounces Cuban-supported terrorism, promote democracy, and seek to de-politicize the military. The U.S. may also find that a little more distance may mean a lot more influence. □

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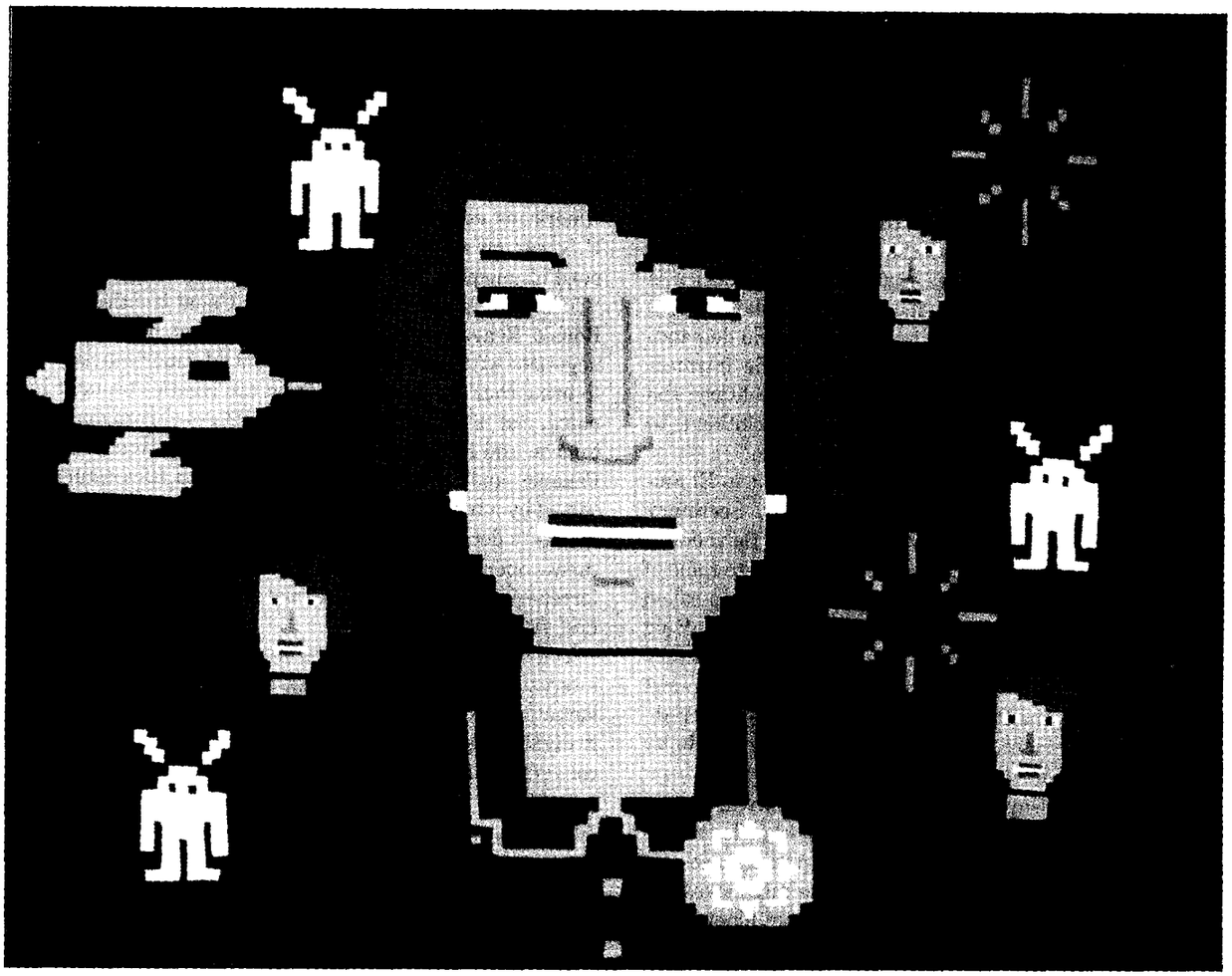

THE RETREAT

A SHORT STORY
BY BOBBIE ANN MASON

GEORGEANN HAS PUT OFF PACKING FOR THE ANNUAL church retreat. "There's plenty of time," she tells Shelby when he bugs her about it. "I can't do things that far ahead."

"Don't you want to go?" he asks her one evening. "You used to love to go."

"I wish they'd do something different, just once. Something besides pray and yack at each other." Georgeann is basting facings on a child's choir robe, and she looks at him testily as she bites off a thread.

Bobbie Ann Mason's collection of short stories will be published in the fall.

Shelby says, "You've been looking peaked lately. I believe you've got low blood."

"There's nothing wrong with me."

"I think you better get a checkup before we go. Call Dr. Armstrong in the morning."

When Georgeann married Shelby Pickett, her mother warned her about the disadvantages of marrying a preacher. Delinquents who suddenly get saved always make the worst kind of preachers, her mother said—just like former drug addicts in their zealousness. Shelby was never that bad, though. In high school, when Georgeann first knew him, he was on probation for stealing four cases of Sundrop cola and a ham from Kroger's. There was something

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charismatic about him even then, although he frightened her at first with his gloomy countenance—a sort of James Dean brooding—and his tendency to contradict whatever the teachers said. But she admired the way he argued so smoothly and professionally in debate class. He always had a smart answer that left his opponent speechless. He was the type of person who could get away with anything. Georgeann thought he seemed a little dangerous—he was always staring people down, as though he held a deep grudge—but when she started going out with him, at the end of her senior year, she was surprised to discover how serious he was. He had spent a month studying the life of Winston Churchill. It wasn't even a class assignment. No one she knew would have thought of doing that. When the date of the senior prom approached, Shelby said he couldn't take her because he didn't believe in dancing. Georgeann suspected that he was just embarrassed and shy. On a Friday night, when her parents were away at the movies, she put on a Kinks album and tried to get him to loosen up, to get in shape for the prom. It was then that he told her of his ambition to be a preacher. Georgeann was so moved by his sense of atonement and his commitment to the calling—he had received the call while hauling hay for an uncle—that she knew she would marry him. On the night of the prom, they went instead to the Burger King, and he showed her the literature on the seminary while she ate a Double Whopper and french fries.

The ministry is not necessarily a full-time calling, Georgeann discovered. The pay is too low. While Shelby attended seminary, he also went to night school to learn a trade, and Georgeann supported him by working at Kroger's—the same one her husband had robbed. Georgeann had wanted to go to college, but they were never able to afford for her to go.

Now they have two children, Tamara and Jason. During the week, Shelby is an electrician, working out of his van. In ten years of marriage, they have served in three different churches. Shelby dislikes the rotation system and longs for a church he can call his own. He says he wants to grow with a church, so that he knows the people and doesn't have to preach only the funerals of strangers. He wants to perform the marriages of people he knew as children. Shelby lives by many little rules, some of which come out of nowhere. For instance, for years he has rubbed baking soda onto his gums after brushing his teeth, but he cannot remember who taught him to do this, or exactly why. Shelby comes from a broken home, so he wants things to last. But the small country churches in western Kentucky are dying, as people move to town or simply lose interest in the church. The membership at the Grace United Methodist Church is seventy-five, but attendance varies between thirty and seventy. The day it snowed this past winter, only three people came. Shelby was so depressed afterward that he couldn't eat Sunday dinner. He was particularly upset because he had prepared a special sermon aimed at Hoyt Jenkins, who somebody said had begun drinking, but Hoyt did not appear. Shelby had to deliver the sermon anyway, on the evils of alcohol, to old Mr. and Mrs. Elbert Flood and Miss Addie Stone, the president of the WCTU chapter.

"Even the best people need a little reinforcement," Shelby said half-heartedly to Georgeann.

She said, "Why didn't you just save that sermon? You work yourself half to death. With only three people there, you could have just talked to them, like a conversation. You didn't have to waste a big sermon like that."

"The church isn't for just a conversation," said Shelby.

The music was interesting that snowy day. Georgeann plays the piano at church. As she played, she listened to the voices singing—Shelby booming out like Bert Parks; the weak, shaky voices of the Floods; and Miss Stone, with a surprisingly clear and pretty little voice. She sounded like a folk singer. Georgeann wanted to hear more, so she abruptly switched hymns and played "Joy to the World," which she knew the Floods would have trouble with. Miss Stone sang out, high above Shelby's voice. Later, Shelby was annoyed that Georgeann had changed the program because he liked for the church bulletins that she typed and mimeographed each week before the Sunday service to be an accurate record of what went on that day. Georgeann made corrections on the bulletin and filed it in Shelby's study. She penciled in a note, "Three people showed up." She even listed their names. Writing this, Georgeann felt peculiar, as though a gear had shifted inside her.

Even then, back in the winter, Shelby had been looking forward to the retreat, talking about it like a little boy anticipating summer camp.

GEORGEANN HAS BEEN FEELING DISORIENTED. SHE can't think about the packing for the retreat. She's not finished with the choir robes for Jason and Tamara, who sing in the youth choir. On the Sunday before the retreat, Georgeann realizes that it is Communion Sunday and she has forgotten to buy grape juice. She has to race into town at the last minute to buy it. It is overpriced at the Kwik-Pik, but that is the only place open on Sunday. Waiting in line, she discovers that she still has hair clips in her hair. As she stands there, she watches two teenage boys in everyday clothes playing an electronic video game. One boy is pressing buttons, his fingers working rapidly and a look of rapture on his face. The other boy is watching and murmuring "Gah!" Georgeann holds her hand out automatically for the change when the salesgirl rings up the grape juice. She stands by the door a few minutes, watching the boys. The machine makes tom-tom sounds, and blips fly across the screen. When she gets to the church, she is so nervous that she sloshes the grape juice while pouring it into the tray of tiny Communion glasses. Two of the glasses are missing because she broke them last month while washing them after Communion service. She has forgotten to order replacements. Shelby will notice, but she

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will say that it doesn't matter, because there won't be that many people at church anyway.

"You spilled some," says Tamara.

"You forgot to let us have some," Jason says, taking one of the little glasses and holding it out. Tamara takes one of the glasses too. This is something they do every Communion Sunday.

"I'm in a hurry," says Georgeann. "This isn't a tea party."

They are still holding the glasses out to her.

"Do you want one too?" Jason asks.

"No, I don't have time."

Both children look disappointed, but they drink the sip of grape juice, and Tamara takes the glasses to wash them.

"Hurry," says Georgeann.

Shelby doesn't mention the missing glasses. But over Sunday dinner, they quarrel about her going to a funeral he has to preach that afternoon.

"Why should I go? I didn't even know the man."

"Who is he?" Tamara wants to know.

Shelby says, "No one you know. Hush."

Jason says, "I'll go with you. I like to go to funerals."

"I'm not going," says Georgeann. "They give me nightmares, and I didn't even know the guy."

Shelby glares at her icily for talking like this in front of the children. He agrees to go alone, and promises Jason he can go to the next one. Today the children are going to Georgeann's sister's to play with their cousins. "You don't want to disappoint Jeff and Lisa, do you?" Shelby asks Jason.

As he is getting ready to leave, Shelby asks Georgeann, "Is there something about the way I preach funerals that bothers you?"

"No. Your preaching's fine. I like the weddings. And the piano and everything. But just count me out when it comes to funerals." Georgeann suddenly bangs a skillet in the sink. "Why do I have to tell you that ten times a year?"

They quarrel infrequently, but after they do, Georgeann always does something spiteful. Today, while Shelby and the kids are away, she cleans out the hen-house. It gives her pleasure to put on her jeans and shovel manure into a cart. She wheels it to the garden, not caring who sees. People drive by and she waves. There's the preacher's wife, cleaning out her hen-house on Sunday, they are probably saying. Georgeann puts down new straw in the hen-house and gathers the eggs. She sees a hen looking droopy in a corner. "Perk up," she says. "You look like you've got low blood." After she finishes with the chore, she sits down to read the Sunday papers, feeling relieved that she is alone and can relax. She gets very sleepy, but in a few minutes she has to get up and change clothes. She is getting itchy under the waistband, probably from chicken mites.

She turns the radio on and finds a country-music station.

When Shelby comes in, with the children, she is asleep on the couch. They tiptoe around her and she pretends to sleep on. "Sunday is a day of rest," Shelby is saying to the children. "For everybody but preachers, that is." Shelby turns off the radio.

"Not for me," says Jason. "That's my day to play catch with Jeff."

When Georgeann gets up, Shelby gives her a hug, one of his proper Sunday embraces. She apologizes for not going with him. "How was the funeral?"

"The usual. You don't really want to know, do you?"

"No."

GEORGEANN PLANS FOR THE RETREAT. SHE MAKES A doctor's appointment for Wednesday. She takes Shelby's suits to the cleaners. She visits some shut-ins she neglected to see on Sunday. She arranges with her mother to keep Tamara and Jason. Although her mother still believes Georgeann married unwisely, she now promotes the sanctity of the union. "Marriage is forever, but a preacher's marriage is longer than that," she says.

Today, Georgeann's mother sounds as though she is making excuses for Shelby. She knows that Georgeann is unhappy, but she says, "I never gave him much credit at first, but Lord knows he's ambitious. I'll say that for him. And practical. He knew he had to learn a trade so he could support himself in his dedication to the church."

"You make him sound like a junkie supporting a habit."

Georgeann's mother laughs uproariously. "It's the same thing! The same thing." She is a stout, good-looking woman who loves to drink at parties. She and Shelby have never had much to say to each other, and Georgeann gets very sad whenever she realizes that her mother treats her marriage like a joke. It isn't fair.

When Georgeann feeds the chickens, she notices the sick hen unable to get up on its feet. Its comb is turning black. She picks it up and sets it in the hen-house. She puts some mash in a Crisco can and sets it in front of the chicken. It pecks indifferently at the mash. Georgeann goes to the house and finds a margarine tub and fills it with water. There is nothing to do for a sick chicken, except to let it die. Or kill it, to keep disease from spreading to the others. She won't tell Shelby the chicken is sick, because Shelby will get the ax and chop its head off. Shelby isn't being cruel. He believes in the necessities of things.

Shelby will have a substitute in church next Sunday, while he is at the retreat, but he has his sermon ready for the following Sunday. On Tuesday evening, Georgeann types it for him. He writes in longhand on yellow legal pads, the way Nixon wrote his memoirs, and after ten years Georgeann has finally mastered his corkscrew handwriting. The sermon is on sex education in the schools. When Georgeann comes to a word she doesn't know, she goes downstairs.

"There's no such word as 'pucelage,' " she says to Shelby, who is at the kitchen table, trying to fix a gun-shaped hair-dryer. Parts are scattered all over the table.

"Sure there is," he says. " 'Pucelage' means virginity."

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"Why didn't you say so! Nobody will know what it means."

"But it's just the word I want."

"And what about this word in the next paragraph? 'Maturescent'? Are you kidding?"

"Now don't start in on how I'm making fun of you because you haven't been to college," Shelby says.

Georgeann doesn't answer. She goes back to the study and continues typing. Something pinches her on the stomach. She raises her blouse and scratches a bite. She sees a tiny brown speck scurrying across her flesh. Fascinated, she catches it by moistening a fingertip. It drowns in her saliva. She puts it on a scrap of yellow legal paper and folds it up. Something to show the doctor. Maybe the doctor will let her look at it under a microscope.

The next day, Georgeann goes to the doctor, taking the speck with her. "I started getting these bites after I cleaned out the hen-house," she tells the nurse. "And I've been handling a sick chicken."

The nurse scrapes the speck onto a slide and instructs Georgeann to get undressed and put on a paper robe so that it opens in the back. Georgeann piles her clothes in a corner behind a curtain and pulls on the paper robe. As she waits, she twists and stretches a corner of the robe, but the paper is tough, like the "quicker picker-upper" paper towel she has seen in TV ads. When the doctor bursts in, Georgeann gets a whiff of strong cologne.

The doctor says, "I'm afraid we can't continue with the examination until we treat you for that critter you brought in." He looks alarmed.

"I was cleaning out the hen-house," Georgeann explains. "I figured it was a chicken mite."

"What you have is a body louse. I don't know how you got it, but we'll have to treat it completely before we can look at you further."

"Do they carry diseases?"

"This *is* a disease," the doctor says. "What I want you to do is take off that paper gown and wad it up very tightly into a ball and put it in the wastebasket. Whatever you do, don't shake it! When you get dressed, I'll tell you what to do next."

Later, after prescribing a treatment, the doctor lets her look at the louse through the microscope. It looks like a bloated tick from a dog; it is lying on its back and its legs are flung around crazily.

"I just brought it in for fun," Georgeann says. "I had no idea."

At the library, she looks up "louse" in a medical book. There are three kinds, and to her relief she has the kind that won't get in the hair. The book says that body lice are common only in alcoholics and indigent elderly persons who rarely change their clothes. Georgeann cannot imagine how she got lice. When she goes to the drugstore to get her prescription filled, a woman brushes close to her, and Georgeann sends out a silent message: I have lice. She is enjoying this.

"I've got lice," she announces when Shelby gets home. "I have to take a fifteen-minute hot shower and put this cream on all over, and then I have to wash all the clothes and curtains and everything—and what's more, the same goes for you and Tamara and Jason. You're incubating them, the doctor said. They're in the bedcovers and the mattresses and the rugs. Everywhere." Georgeann makes creepy-crawling motions with her fingers.

The pain on Shelby's face registers with her after a moment. "What about the retreat?" he asks.

"I don't know if I'll have time to get all this done first."

"This sounds fishy to me. Where would you get lice?"

Georgeann shrugs. "He asked me if I'd been to a motel room lately. I probably got them from one of those shut-ins. Old Mrs. Speed, maybe. That filthy old horsehair chair of hers."

Shelby looks really depressed, but Georgeann continues brightly, "I thought sure it was chicken mites because I'd been cleaning out the hen-house? But he let me look at it in the microscope and he said it was a body louse."

"Those doctors don't know everything," Shelby says. "Why don't you call a vet? I bet that doctor you went to wouldn't know a chicken mite if it crawled up his leg."

"He said it was lice."

"I've been itching ever since you brought this up."

"Don't worry. Why don't we just get you ready for the retreat—clean clothes and hot shower—and then I'll stay here and get the rest of us fumigated?"

"You don't really want to go to the retreat, do you?"

Georgeann doesn't answer. She gets busy in the kitchen. She makes a pork roast for supper, with fried apples and mashed potatoes. For dessert she makes Jell-O and peaches with Dream Whip. She is really hungry. While she peels potatoes, she sings a song to herself. She doesn't know the name of it, but it has a haunting melody. It is either a song her mother used to sing to her or a jingle from a TV ad.

They decide not to tell Tamara and Jason that the family has lice. Tamara was inspected for head lice once at school, but there is no reason to make a show of this, Shelby tells Georgeann. He gets the children to take long baths by telling them it's a ritual cleansing, something like baptism. That night in bed, after long showers, Georgeann and Shelby don't touch each other. Shelby lies flat with his hands behind his head, looking at the ceiling. He talks about the value of spiritual renewal. He wants Georgeann to finish washing all the clothes so that she can go to the retreat. He says, "Every person needs to stop once in a while and take a look at what's around him. Even preaching wears thin."

"Your preaching's up-to-date," Georgeann says. "You're more up-to-date than a lot of those old-timey preachers who haven't even been to seminary." Georgeann is aware that she sounds too perky.

"You know what's going to happen, don't you? This little church is falling off so bad they're probably going to close it down and re-assign me to Deep Springs."

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"Well, you've been expecting that for a long time, haven't you?"

"It's awful," Shelby says. "These people depend on this church. They don't want to travel all the way to Deep Springs. Besides, everybody wants their own home church." He reaches across Georgeann and turns out the light.

The next day, after Shelby finishes wiring a house, he consults with a veterinarian about chicken mites. When he comes home, he tells Georgeann that in the veterinarian's opinion, the brown speck was a chicken mite. "The vet just laughed at that doctor," Shelby says. "He said the mites would leave of their own accord. They're looking for chickens, not people."

"Should I wash all these clothes or not? I'm half finished."

"I don't itch anymore, do you?"

Shelby has brought home a can of roost paint, a chemical to kill chicken mites. Georgeann takes the roost paint to the hen-house and applies it to the roosts. It smells like fumes from a paper mill, and almost makes her gag. When she finishes, she gathers eggs, and then sees that the sick hen has flopped outside again and can't get up on her feet. Georgeann carries the chicken into the hen-house and sets her down by the food. She examines the chicken's feathers. Suddenly she notices that the chicken is covered with moving specks. Georgeann backs out of the hen-house and looks at her hands in the sunlight. The specks are swarming all over her hands. She watches them head up her arms, spinning crazily, disappearing on her.

THE RETREAT IS AT A LODGE AT KENTUCKY LAKE. IN the mornings, a hundred people eat a country-ham breakfast on picnic tables, out of doors by the lake. The dew is still on the grass. Now and then a speedboat races by, drowning out conversation. Georgeann wears a badge with her name on it and "BACK TO BASICS," the theme of the gathering, in Gothic lettering. After the first day, Shelby's spirit seems renewed. He talks and laughs with old acquaintances, and during social hour, he seems cheerful and relaxed. At the workshops and lectures, he takes notes like mad on his yellow legal paper, which he carries on a clipboard. He already has fifty ideas for new sermons, he tells Georgeann happily. He looks handsome in his clean suit. She has begun to see him as someone remote, like a meter-reader. Georgeann thinks: He is not the same person who once stole a ham.

On the second day, she skips silent prayers after breakfast and stays in the room watching Phil Donahue. Donahue is interviewing parents of murdered children; the parents have organized to support each other in their grief. There is an organization for everything, Georgeann realizes. When Shelby comes in, before the noon meal, she is asleep and the farm-market report is blaring from the TV. As she wakes up, he turns off the TV. Shelby is a kind and good man, she says to herself. He still thinks she has low blood. He wants to bring her food on a tray, but Georgeann refuses.

"I'm alive," she says. "There's a workshop this afternoon I want to go to. On marriage. Do you want to go to that one?"

"No, I can't make that one," says Shelby, consulting his schedule. "I have to attend The Changing Role of the Country Pastor."

"It will probably be just women," says Georgeann. "You wouldn't enjoy it." When he looks at her oddly, she says, "I mean the one on marriage."

Shelby winks at her. "Take notes for me."

The workshop concerns Christian marriage. A woman leading the workshop describes seven kinds of intimacy, and eleven women volunteer their opinions. Seven of the women present are ministers' wives. Georgeann isn't counting herself. The women talk about marriage enhancement, a term that is used five times.

A fat woman in a pink dress says, "God made man so that he can't resist a woman's adoration. She should treat him as a priceless treasure, for man is the highest form of creation. A man is born of God—and, just think, *you* get to live with him."

"That's so exciting I can hardly stand it," says a young woman, giggling, then looking around innocently with an expansive smile.

"Christians are such beautiful people," says the fat woman. "And we have such nice-looking young people. We're not dowdy at all."

"People just get that idea," someone says.

A tall woman with curly hair stands up and says, "The world has become so filled with the false, the artificial—we have gotten so phony that we think the First Lady doesn't have smelly feet. Or the Pope doesn't go to the bathroom."

"Leave the Pope out of this," says the fat woman in pink. "He can't get married." Everyone laughs.

Georgeann stands up and asks a question. "What do you do if the man you're married to—this is just a hypothetical question—say, he's the cream of creation and all, and he's sweet as can be, but he turns out to be the wrong one for you? What do you do if you're just simply mismatched?"

Everyone looks at her.

SHELBY STAYS BUSY WITH THE WORKSHOPS AND LECtures, and Georgeann wanders in and out of them, as though she is visiting someone else's dreams. She and Shelby pass each other casually on the path, hurrying along between the lodge and the conference building. They wave hello like friendly acquaintances. In bed she tells him, "Christella Simmons told me I looked like Mindy on *Mork & Mindy.* Do you think I do?"

Shelby laughs. She expects him to lecture her on false women and all their finery. "Don't be silly," he says. When he reaches for her, she turns away.

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The next day, Georgeann walks by the lake. She watches sea gulls flying over the water. It amazes her that sea gulls have flown this far inland, as though they were looking for something, the source of all that water. They are above the water, flying away from her. She expects them to return, like hurled boomerangs. The sky changes as she watches, puffy clouds thinning out into threads, a jet contrail intersecting them and spreading, like something melting: an icicle. The sun pops out. Georgeann walks past a family of picnickers. The family is having an argument over who gets to use an inner tube first. The father says threateningly, "I'm going to get me a switch!" Georgeann feels a stiffening inside her. Instead of letting go, loosening up, relaxing, she is tightening up. But this means she is growing stronger.

Georgeann goes to the basement of the lodge to buy a Coke from a machine, but she finds herself drawn to the electronic games along the wall. She puts a quarter in one of the machines, the Galaxians. She is a Galaxian, with a rocket ship something like the *Enterprise* on *Star Trek*, firing at a convoy of fleeing, multi-colored aliens. When her missiles hit them, they make satisfying little bursts of color. Suddenly, as she is firing away, three of them—two red ships and one yellow ship—zoom down the screen and blow up her ship. She loses her three ships one right after the other and the game is over. Georgeann runs upstairs to the desk and gets change for a dollar. She puts another quarter in the machine and begins firing. She likes the sound of the firing and the siren-wail of the diving formation. She is beginning to get the hang of it. The hardest thing is controlling the left and right movements of her ship with her left hand as she tries to aim or to dodge the formation. The aliens keep returning and she keeps on firing and firing until she goes through all her quarters.

After supper, Georgeann removes her name badge and escapes to the basement again. Shelby has gone to the

THE ART OF LOVE

We get handwritten cards from the children:
Dear Parents, come visit our school—
our names painfully etched in crabbed script, the art
teacher's latest project. We say we would love
to come. We'll see Home Room, Art, and Music.
We promise to be there on time.

We've been talking a good deal these days about time.
About how when we were children
time was a kind of slow music,
a sure pulse of expectation, a school
in which, leisurely, we learned about love,
in which singing all day took no art.

The memory itself, we know, is all art.
It was never so happy as that at the time,
we remind ourselves, laughing, and love
wasn't easy, not even for children.
We remember those queasy afternoons after school:
the dark corridors of failure, of facing the music.

The first room we visit this time is Music.
An old upright piano, locked; art
work carved on the marred wooden school
desks; a metronome keeping the time
as we go through the motions of singing, the children
teaching us all of the songs that they love.

Valentines plaster the walls of the Art Room: Love
with its gaudy construction and fluff. No music
in these rough cuts and doilies the children
manufacture in the interests of "art."
It's getting late now, the time
moving faster, faster than it ever did in school.

But Home Room's the best thing in school,
they insist! We follow them out of love
through a motley of workbooks, torn papers, and time
tests, until memory turns up its old music
and everything blurs—Home Room, Music, and Art—
to the slow bobbing heads of the children.

And we know we would school ourselves in such music,
would cut out and paste up such love for all time,
would make a new start. Were we children. Had we the art.

—Ronald Wallace

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evening service, but she told him she had a headache. She has five dollars' worth of quarters, and she loses two of them before she can regain her control. Her game improves and she scores 3,660. The high score of the day, according to the machine, is 28,480. The situation is dangerous and thrilling, but Georgeann feels in control. She isn't running away; she is chasing the aliens. The basement is dim, and some men are playing at the other machines. One of them begins watching her game, making her nervous. When the game ends, he says, "You get 800 points when you get those three zonkers, but you have to get the yellow one last or it ain't worth as much."

"You must be an expert," says Georgeann, looking at him skeptically.

"You catch on after a while."

The man says he is a trucker. He wears a yellow billed cap and a denim jacket lined with fleece. He says, "You're good. Get a load of them fingers."

"I play the piano."

"Are you with them church people?"

"Uh-huh."

"You don't look like a church lady."

Georgeann plugs in another quarter. "This could be an expensive habit," she says idly. It has just occurred to her how good-looking the man is. He has curly sideburns that seem to match the fleece inside his jacket.

"I'm into Space Invaders myself," the trucker says. "See, in Galaxians, you're attacking from behind. It's a kind of cowardly way to go at things."

"Well, they turn around and get you," says Georgeann. "And they never stop coming. There's always more of them."

The man takes off his cap and tugs at his hair, then puts his cap back on. "I'd ask you out for a beer, but I don't want to get in trouble with the church." He laughs. "Do you want a Coke? I'll buy you a Co'-Cola."

Georgeann shakes her head no. She starts the new game. The aliens are flying in formation. She begins the chase. When the game ends—her best yet—she turns to look for the man, but he has left.

Georgeann spends most of the rest of the retreat in the basement, playing Galaxians. She doesn't see the trucker again. Eventually, Shelby finds her in the basement. She has lost track of time, and she has spent all their reserve cash. Shelby is treating her like a mental case. When she tries to explain to him how it feels to play the game, he looks at her indulgently, the way he looks at shut-ins when he takes them baskets of fruit. "You forget everything but who you are," Georgeann tells him. "Your mind leaves your body." Shelby looks depressed.

As they drive home, he says, "What can I do to make you happy?"

Georgeann doesn't answer at first. She's still blasting aliens off a screen in her mind. "I'll tell you when I can get it figured out," she says slowly. "Just let me work on it."

Shelby lets her alone. They drive home in silence. As they turn off the main highway toward the house, she says suddenly, "I was happy when I was playing that game."

"We're not children," says Shelby. "What do you want—toys?"

At home, the grass needs cutting. The brick house looks small and shabby, like something abandoned. In the mailbox, Shelby finds his re-assignment letter. He has been switched to the Deep Springs church, sixty miles away. They will probably have to move. Shelby folds up the letter and puts it back in the envelope, then goes to his study. The children are not home yet, and Georgeann wanders around the house, pulling up the shades, looking for things that have changed in her absence. A short while later, she goes to Shelby's study, and knocks on the door. One of his little rules. She says, "I can't go to Deep Springs. I'm not going with you."

Shelby stands up, blocking the light from the windows. "I don't want to move either," he says. "But it's too awful far to commute."

"You don't understand. I don't want to go at all. I want to stay here by myself so I can think straight."

"What's got into you lately, girl? Have you gone crazy?" Shelby draws the blind on the window so the sun doesn't glare in. He says, "You've got me so confused. Here I am in this big crisis and you're not standing by me."

"I don't know how."

Shelby snaps his fingers. "We can go to a counselor."

"I went to that marriage workshop and it was a lot of hooey."

Shelby's face has a pallor, Georgeann notices. He is distractedly thumbing through some papers, his notes from the conference. Georgeann realizes that Shelby is going to compose a sermon directed at her. "We're going to have to pray over this," he says quietly.

"Later," says Georgeann. "I have to go pick up the kids."

Before leaving, she goes to check on the chickens. A neighbor has been feeding them. The sick chicken is still alive, but it doesn't move from a corner under the roost. Its eyelids are half shut, and its comb is dark and crusty. The hen-house still smells of roost paint. Georgeann gathers eggs and takes them to the kitchen. Then, without stopping to reflect, she gets the ax from the shed and returns to the hen-house. She picks up the sick chicken and takes it outside to a stump behind the hen-house. She sets the chicken on the stump and examines its feathers. She doesn't see any mites on it now. Taking the hen by the feet, she lays it on its side, its head pointing away from her. She holds its body down, pressing its wings. The chicken doesn't struggle. When the ax crashes down blindly on its neck, Georgeann feels nothing, but knows she has done her duty. □

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THE NUCLEAR DEBATE

I

RUSSIAN AND AMERICAN INTENTIONS

BY FRED KAPLAN

THE NATION'S DEFENSE BUDGET IS CLIMBING AT A faster rate than ever in peacetime—13 percent in real terms this year. Even though Congress will no doubt take diffident stabs at the Pentagon's extraordinary coffers, the final result will probably be only slightly less than the $1.6 trillion that Ronald Reagan wants to spend on defense—$180 billion of it on strategic nuclear arms—over the next five years.

There are many reasons for the general approval of this budget, some related to the growing sense of America's insecurity—compared with its status twenty years ago—in a dangerous world. But one reason has to do with a fear that has been spread across the land by a group of extremely hawkish specialists on the Soviet Union—the fear that the Kremlin leadership thinks it can fight and win a nuclear war.

Ronald Reagan believes this idea, and has referred in one press interview to "those monsters" who "have a different regard for human life." Vice President George Bush believes it. So, according to many of their published statements, do Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger and Secretary of State Alexander Haig. So does the Committee on the Present Danger, an anti-détente organization founded in 1976, which includes the President as well as many highly placed members of the Reagan Administration. One of the leading popularizers of the idea is Richard Pipes, a former Harvard professor; he wrote a highly influential article in the July, 1977, *Commentary* called "Why the Soviet Union Thinks It Could Fight and Win a Nuclear War," and he is now the senior specialist on Soviet and Eastern European Affairs in the National Security Council.

The politicians and academics who have made this idea almost commonplace claim that proof of Soviet intentions can be found in the officers' manuals and military staff journals published in the USSR. They go on to say that the American military establishment is ill equipped to wage World War III against so determined an enemy; that Americans, unlike the Russians, tend to think of nuclear weapons as instruments for deterring a war, not for fighting one; that the idea of "winning" a nuclear war strikes most Americans as absurd. One prolific defense writer, Colin Gray, of the National Institute for Public Policy, has even suggested that there is something about the American "national style" that precludes our thinking about fighting a nuclear war.

Yet such a perspective distorts the Soviet as well as the American position. These analysts try to have it both ways. They dismiss the less aggressive Soviet literature—statements by President Leonid Brezhnev and the like—as propaganda designed to delude the West into a state of complacency, and point to the more technical military literature, where truth presumably lies. To draw contrasts between us and them, however, they quote selectively from public statements by American Presidents and secretaries of defense and even academic arms-control specialists, never delving into the more arcane military manuals whose Soviet counterparts they regard as reflecting the genuine Party line.

This sort of methodology is not merely a case of polemicists trying to have it both ways. It indicates the deeper flaw of failing to draw the fundamental distinction between doctrine and military science. Dimitri K. Simes, a Soviet emigré and scholar, spelled out this distinction very clearly in a recent *New York Times* Op-Ed article. Soviet doctrine, he wrote, "is formulated jointly by political and military leaders. It defines basic strategic goals, suggests ways and means to achieve them through the force of arms, and distinguishes between acceptable and prohibitive costs and risks. And it unambiguously states that nuclear war is unwinnable and should be avoided."

On the other hand, Dr. Simes continued, "the Kremlin simultaneously assumes that the tragic possibility of such a confrontation cannot be excluded." And so, military science "addresses the best way to organize forces to enhance

Fred Kaplan, who writes frequently about defense issues, is at work on a book about nuclear strategists.

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deterrence and to fight a war should deterrence fail. This science is developed exclusively by the uniformed military; it deals with practical problems of waging war—not with the question of whether to initiate a nuclear exchange."

The same distinction applies to the United States. If the scholars who have quoted so copiously from the Soviet military literature bothered to venture into the vast volumes of field manuals, officers' handbooks, official statements, and other documentation concerning their own country's military science, they would come to different conclusions about what constitutes uniquely Soviet military intentions. For perusal of the American literature shows that American officers also think and write a great deal about fighting and winning a nuclear war, that they have done so for many years, and continue to do so.

IT IS HELD BY MANY AMERICAN SOVIETOLOGISTS THAT Soviet military literature makes no distinction between nuclear and non-nuclear weapons, and that this demonstrates incontrovertibly the dangerous nuclear tendencies of the USSR. The most frequently quoted statement in support of this thesis comes from Marshal V. D. Sokolovskiy's 1962 classic, *Military Strategy*, a third edition of which was released in 1968. Sokolovskiy says that "the essential nature of war as a continuation of politics does not change with changing technology and armaments."

However, few of the Americans who allude to Sokolovskiy seem to have glanced at the U.S. Army's 1971 field manual *Tactical Nuclear Operations*, the second chapter of which begins:

> The introduction of tactical nuclear weapons onto the battlefield neither negates the principles of war described in FM 100-5 [the basic Army field manual] nor causes the development of new ones. The intensity of a tactical nuclear conflict emphasizes the importance of these fundamental truths and demands the competent application of these principles by those who would succeed in battle.

Or, as Lt. Col. Paul C. Dillon of the Army's Command and General Staff College put it in a 1970 issue of *Military Review*, published by the Army at Ft. Leavenworth: "When placed in perspective, it is apparent that nuclear power simply provides the ability to accomplish objectives which would not otherwise be attainable."

Joseph Douglass, Jr. and Amoretta Hoeber, authors of a widely circulated booklet called *Soviet Strategy for Nuclear War*, contend that "in contrast to much of Western military literature, the Soviet literature is seriously directed to the problems of fighting and winning a nuclear war."

But is the Soviet literature really so different from ours? Those who think so should look at the U.S. Army field manual *Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical (NBC) Reconnaissance and Decontamination Operations*, published in February of 1980, which baldly states: "The US Army must be prepared to fight and win when nuclear weapons are used." Essentially the same sentence appears in a June, 1977, manual, *The Tank and Mechanized Infantry Company Team*.

Further elaboration can be found in "Extending the Battlefield," an article written by General Donn A. Starry in the March, 1981, *Military Review*—which, incidentally, Pentagon press officers eagerly pass out to reporters who ask about the Army's thinking these days on theater nuclear war-fighting. General Starry was commander of the Army's Training and Doctrine Command when he wrote the article; he is now commander in chief of the U.S. Readiness Command. Starry writes that "the purpose of military operations cannot be simply to avert defeat, but, rather, it must be to win." Some civilian nuclear strategists have talked of theater nuclear weapons as the middle rung in a "ladder of deterrence" stretching from conventional forces to strategic nuclear forces. Not General Starry: theater nuclear weapons, he writes, "should not be considered solely as a bridge to strategic nuclear war. They are weapons which must be considered in the context of a war-fighting capability."

After detailing precisely what sorts of weapons, sensors, and tactics would be needed for fighting a nuclear war in a theater (say, Europe), General Starry goes on to

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say that "we will be able to do these things quickly and efficiently on the battlefield of the mid-to-late 1980s," and that "there is, today, considerable potential to do just what has thus far been described." He adds, "There is probably little set forth in this article which is not already being done and done well in some operational units."

Some Western scholars who examine Soviet military manuals seem especially interested in the amount of tactical thinking that Soviet officers have done on the use of nuclear weapons. They note that Soviet officials refer frequently to the need for "sober calculation" and "scientific substantiation." The Soviet manuals go into great detail on how widely troops should be dispersed on a nuclear battlefield, on how they should maneuver, on the effects that nuclear weapons are likely to have on communications gear. Some of the manuals note that the use of nuclear weapons does not mean the end of non-nuclear battle, that conventional military operations will continue if for no other purpose than to occupy territory. And the manuals note that in this regard, nuclear weapons are likely to be decisive.

In all of the discussions of these Soviet efforts, however, it is assumed—tacitly or explicitly—that the United States military manuals do not discuss any of these aspects of warfare. This assumption could not be more in error.

First, numerous U.S. Army field manuals are devoted entirely to the precise effects of nuclear weapons. A very big book, the *Staff Officers' Field Manual: Nuclear Weapons Employment Effects Data*, is crammed with tables, charts, and graphs illustrating how nuclear weapons of various explosive yields, accuracies, and heights-of-burst will affect various types of military equipment, personnel, communications facilities, and troop tactics across various distances. Other manuals devote several chapters to issues of trading off maneuverability and dispersion for force-concentration in a "nuclear environment." Still other articles explain in highly "scientific" terms the effects of nuclear weapons on command-and-control equipment, and how to protect it.

Further, the American literature, like that of the Soviets, assumes that conventional war will continue even after nuclear weapons have been used. This is the essence of the Army's new doctrine of the "integrated battlefield," the subject of General Starry's *Military Review* article. But the ideas offered in his article antedate the doctrine. For example, the U.S. Army field manual *Nuclear Weapons Employment Doctrine and Procedures*, published in March of 1977, reads: ". . . nuclear weapons cannot be used in isolation, but must be integrated with the rest of the fire and maneuver on the battlefield."

Finally, and again like the Soviet manuals, American military literature refers to the potential decisiveness of nuclear weapons. To pick just one example, from *Tactical Nuclear Operations*:

> The use of tactical nuclear weapon systems decisively influences the conduct of operations. Granting commanders authority to employ these munitions tremendously increases their combat power. . . . [A] definite advantage accrues to the combatant who can first regain the maneuverability necessary to exploit the effects of nuclear fire.

DO THE CONTENTS OF THESE OFFICIAL U.S. MILITARY documents suggest or prove that the United States is planning to fight and win a nuclear war? Not necessarily—at least, no more than the contents of frequently cited Soviet military documents suggest or prove that the Soviet Union is planning to do so. Military officers everywhere are trained and paid to fight wars and to try to win them. Almost all of what the hawkish Soviet specialists in the West cite, in an effort to prove that the Soviets are out to fight and win a nuclear war, falls under the category of military science. And so does almost all of the American material cited here—which might just as well have been extracted by an American-affairs expert in the USSR trying to prove that the Americans are out to fight and win a nuclear war. Nothing in either nation's military literature contradicts the wisdom expressed in the broad "doctrine"—as opposed to the "military science"—of both countries: that nuclear war would be catastrophic and must be avoided.

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The tone of science and cool certainty pervading American and Soviet military manuals dealing with nuclear war is a façade, based not on experience in past wars nor on "war games" or exercises. No "first strike" programmed on a computer has left a victim nation so disarmed that it cannot destroy the aggressor's society—or inflict more flexibly "limited" damage, if it wishes—in retaliation. "Tactical nuclear weapons" have existed and been studied for nearly thirty years; but no one has discovered how to use them on the battlefield without destroying the societies that they are supposed to protect.

Yet none of this should be cause for complacent relief. However different the politicians' "doctrine" may be from the military's "science," if major war between the superpowers does break out, and if the losing side feels compelled to go nuclear to avoid certain defeat, these manuals—Soviet *and* American—will be the only guides available. The military officers who have read them closely will follow their instructions. At that point, it may not be so clearly recognized—either by the military or by the political leaders, desperate for easy solutions—that composing a plan to fight and win a nuclear war lies a far distance from actually going out and doing it. Planning to fight wars is what the military is paid to do; but so is executing those plans when the orders are given. In the business of fighting and winning nuclear wars, the Soviets and the Americans are equally susceptible to the dangers of self-delusion. □

II

RUSSIAN AND AMERICAN CAPABILITIES

BY JEROME B. WIESNER

OVER THE PAST THIRTY YEARS, THE NUCLEAR-ARMS race has been propelled by political tensions, by technical innovations, and by rivalries inside the governments of the United States and the Soviet Union. But at the moment, on the American side one overriding concern promotes the buildup of nuclear weapons—the fear that the United States might be denied its ability to inflict a devastating retaliatory blow if the Soviet Union struck first. This fear presumes that a nuclear war, far from being an act of mutual annihilation, might be a controllable, survivable, even "winnable" encounter, and that the Soviet Union may be better equipped than the United States to prevail in a nuclear war.

Such an anxiety, if well grounded, would compel any responsible American leader to search seriously for new nuclear-weapons projects, beginning with the MX missile and perhaps extending to antiballistic-missile systems and greater efforts for civil defense, in the hope of redressing the balance. The Reagan Administration, of course, is pushing ahead on several such fronts and says that it cannot persuade the Soviet Union to negotiate for reductions in strategic weapons unless we first show our determination to increase American strength. Even if the strategic-arms-reduction talks (START) that President Reagan has proposed eventually lead to an agreement, that welcome development would not come sooner than several years from now. In the meantime, American policy need not be driven by a fear of a Soviet first strike. Instead, it should rest on a recognition of the basic reality of the nuclear age: that the only option open to either the Soviet Union or the United States is deterrence. Given today's weapons, neither side can do anything to protect itself against the retaliatory threat the other poses; by the same logic, neither side need fear that its threat to the other will be called into question. This balance hardly justifies political or moral complacency. Because of the catastrophe that would occur if deterrence failed, our best efforts must be directed to preventing the circumstances in which nuclear weapons would ever be used. But the concept of deterrence suggests a very different direction for American action from the one indicated by anticipation of a Soviet first strike.

The current era has often been spoken of as a "window of vulnerability," in which America's nuclear force is uniquely at risk. But it can instead be a "window of opportunity" in which to negotiate an end to the arms race. The most obvious and the most sensible step for the United States at the moment is to add *nothing* to our nuclear forces, and to seize this opportunity to press for a freeze on the develop-

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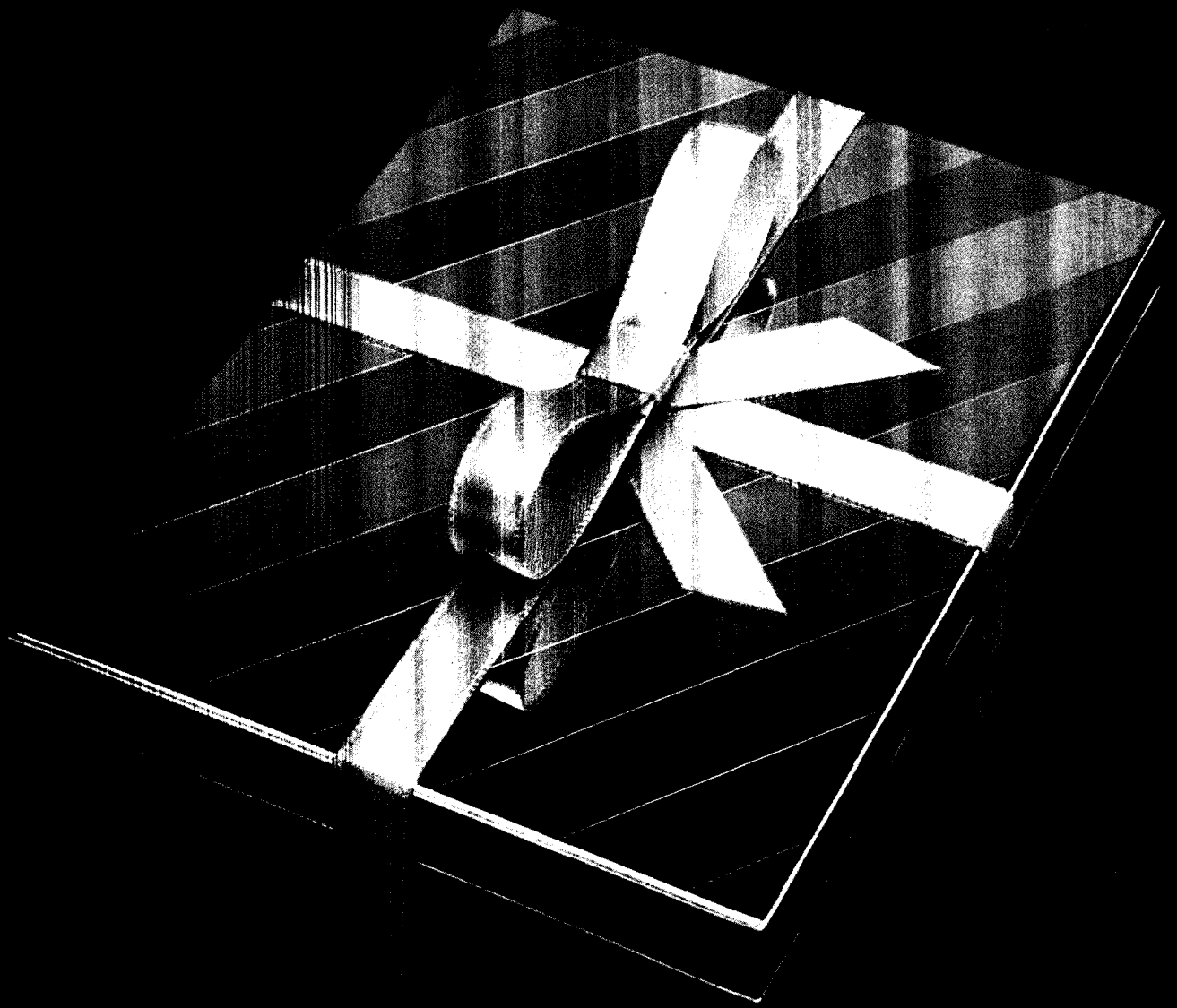
OPEN A BOX OF DELUXE.



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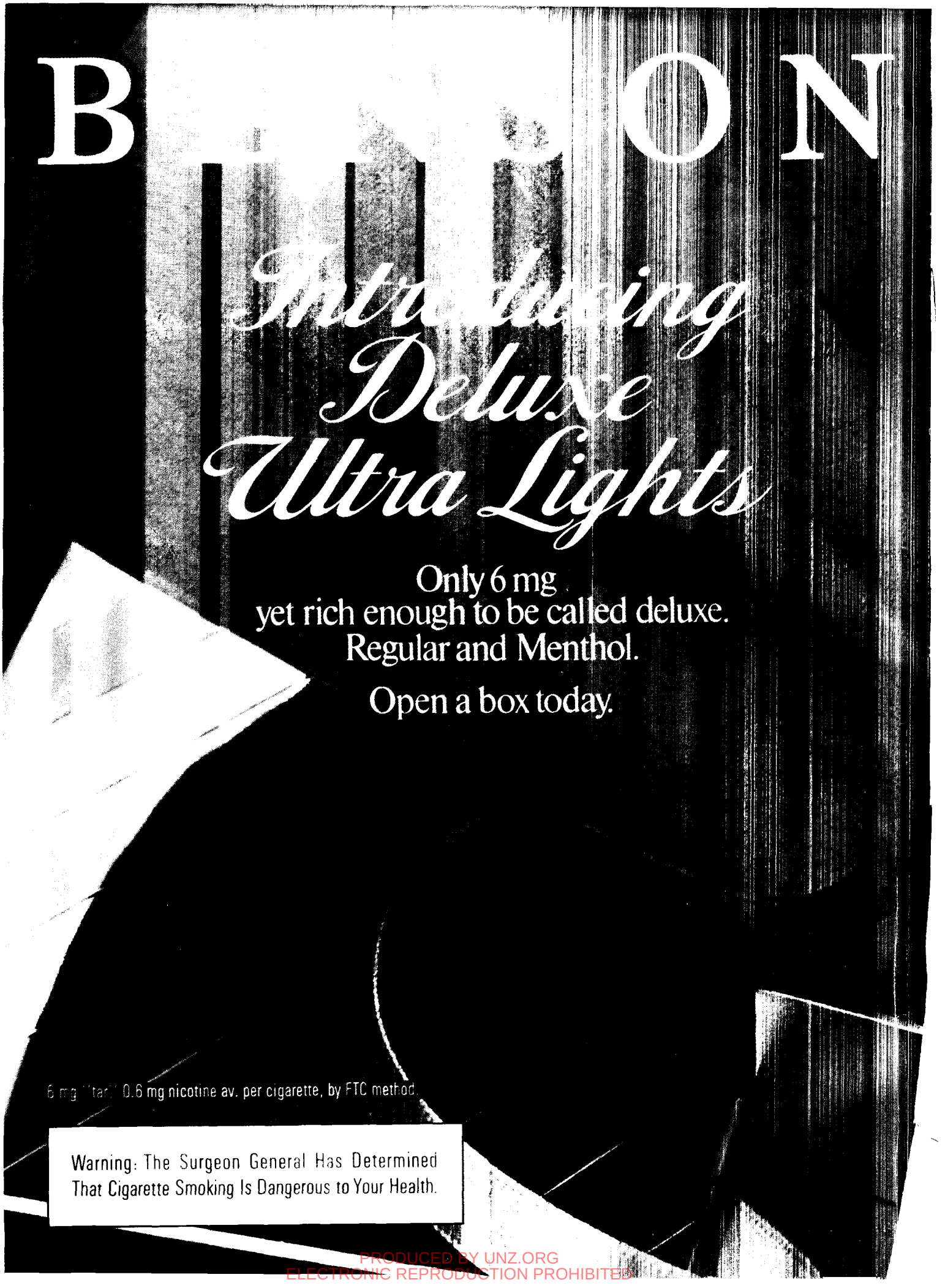

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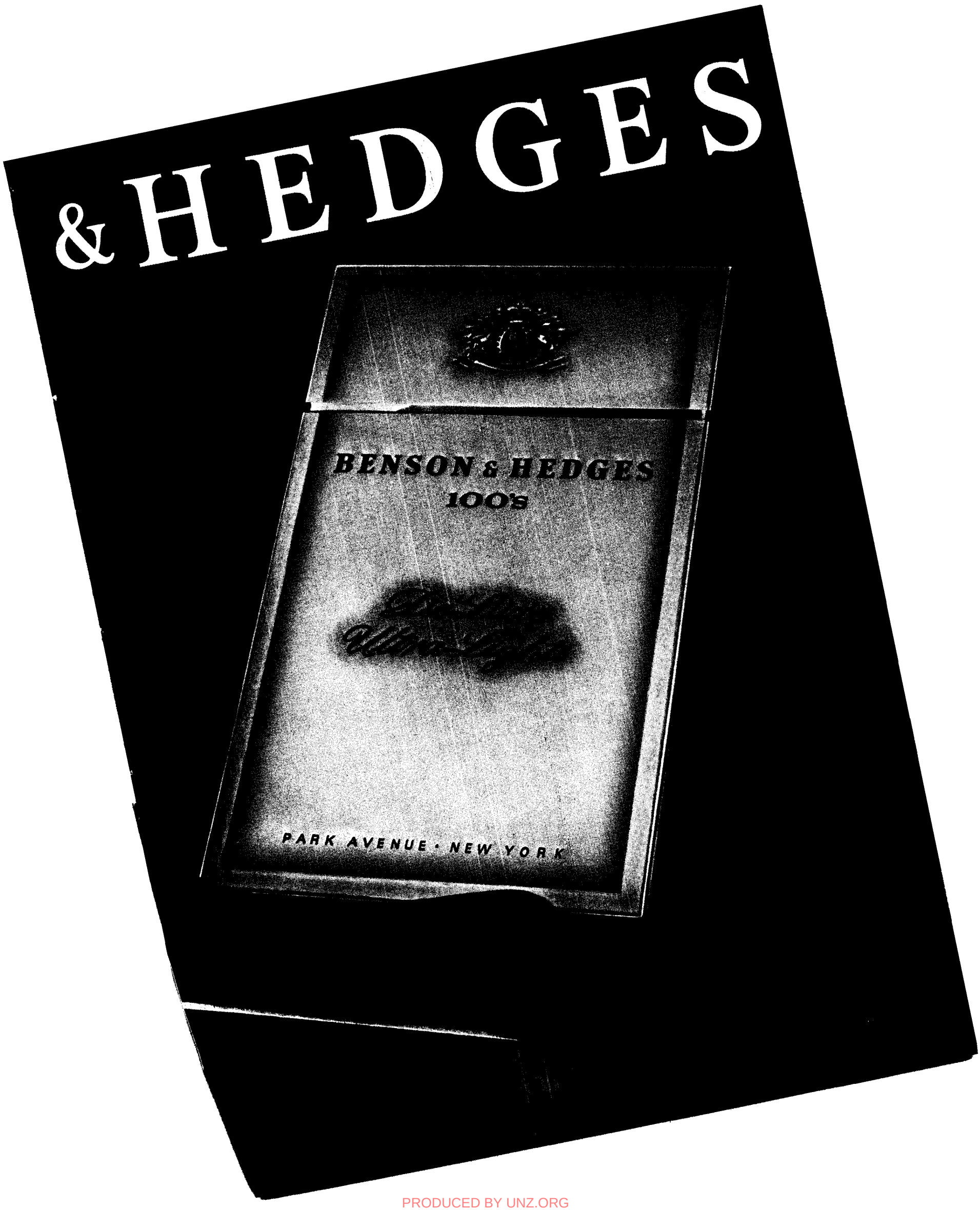

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ment, testing, and deployment of all nuclear weapons and new delivery systems by each side.

As has happened before in the arms race, we have been told that technical progress has created a theoretical vulnerability for our force. The Soviet missile force has increased in size and accuracy, and supposedly poses fresh dangers to our land-based nuclear missiles. The Soviet Union's theoretical ability to destroy nearly all of these missiles in a surprise attack, it is argued, will psychologically upset the balance of deterrence, and will thereby make the United States vulnerable to Soviet blackmail. This will happen, it is further argued, even though the great majority of the American nuclear weapons are carried on bombers or by ballistic-missile submarines, rather than by the Minuteman and Titan missiles that are based in silos throughout the Midwest. An American President might be afraid to retaliate after a Soviet attack on the U.S. missiles, because the Soviet Union would then respond with a major attack on American cities. The conclusion of this line of reasoning is that the U.S. cannot contemplate any slackening of the pace until it has redressed the imbalance by building the MX missile or other systems.

I accepted this scenario myself until I made a few simple calculations concerning how vulnerable the Minuteman system actually is and what the strategic situation would be even if it were somehow totally destroyed. It emerges from any such calculation that neither side can escape the risk of devastating retaliation if it launches a pre-emptive attack. This is the only vital issue for each side—the actual capabilities for responding after attack, not guesses about what the other side's intentions might be. Intentions may change, and they are always difficult to discern. But the meaning of the capabilities is unambiguous: *under present technology, either side could devastate the other after enduring any conceivable attack.*

The U.S. has more deliverable nuclear warheads than the Soviet Union does. A 1978 study prepared for the Congressional Budget Office estimated that in the mid-1980s, when the "window of vulnerability" will allegedly stand open, the U.S. will have 13,904 warheads on its strategic delivery systems, versus 8,794 for the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union, for reasons we have never fully understood, has chosen to build missiles larger than ours, with larger warheads; and its force, though smaller in numbers, contains more "equivalent megatons" than ours does. (The measure "equivalent megaton" takes account of the fact that small nuclear warheads do proportionately more damage than large ones, since the area a warhead destroys does not increase linearly with the size of the warhead.) The same Congressional Budget Office study estimated that in the mid-1980s the U.S. force would represent 4,894 equivalent megatons, versus 8,792 for the Soviet Union. Paul Nitze, of the Committee on the Present Danger, which has been among the most strident of the groups warning about a window of vulnerability, has estimated that if both sides built up to the limits allowed by the SALT II treaty (whose ratification the committee opposed), the U.S. would have 12,504 nuclear warheads and the Soviet Union 11,728. It foresees roughly the same advantage for the Russians in equivalent megatons as does the Congressional Budget Office.

Of the 13,000 to 14,000 warheads projected for the American force, roughly 2,100 are on the Minuteman and Titan missiles. The land-based force represents some 1,507 equivalent megatons. Therefore, if every single Titan and Minuteman were destroyed in a successful surprise attack, the U.S. would be left with somewhere between 11,000 and 12,000 nuclear warheads. The submarine fleet would account for approximately 6,000 of these weapons, and the rest would be carried by bombers. All together, these remaining American warheads would represent about 3,500 equivalent megatons.

IN PLANNING AMERICAN NUCLEAR FORCES IN THE early 1960s, Robert McNamara came to the conclusion that 400 equivalent megatons would be sufficient to inflict unacceptable damage—and that the U.S. could have absolute confidence in its deterrent if it built such a retaliatory capacity three times over, once on the bomber fleet, once on land-based missiles, and once with the submarine force, for a total of 1,200 equivalent megatons. In other words, the 11,000 or 12,000 warheads, representing 3,500 equivalent megatons, that the U.S would retain even after a perfectly successful first strike against our land-based missiles would be three times larger than the force that was itself designed to be able thrice to destroy the Soviet Union. The accuracy of nuclear weapons has improved since McNamara's day, further increasing their effective power. These figures do not even count the several thousand American warheads that are left in Europe and other parts of the world, some of which could be used for retaliation.

Nearly all scenarios for a first strike assume that an attacker would have to target two warheads against each missile silo it hoped to destroy. The U.S. has 1,000 Minuteman missiles and several dozen Titans. The Soviet Union would, therefore, have to devote about 2,200 warheads to an attack. The most generous estimates put the mid-1980s Soviet force at slightly fewer than 12,000 warheads; so after launching its first strike, the Soviet Union would end up with fewer than 10,000 warheads, or several thousand *fewer* than the United States.

So far, these calculations have been based on extreme assumptions: that the Soviet Union would be able to destroy totally the force of Minuteman and Titan missiles, but that it would leave the submarine and bomber fleets intact. More realistic assumptions yield the same conclusion: that a first strike would be suicidal irrationality, which is the premise upon which deterrence is based.

Moreover, first-strike scenarios rest on the assumption

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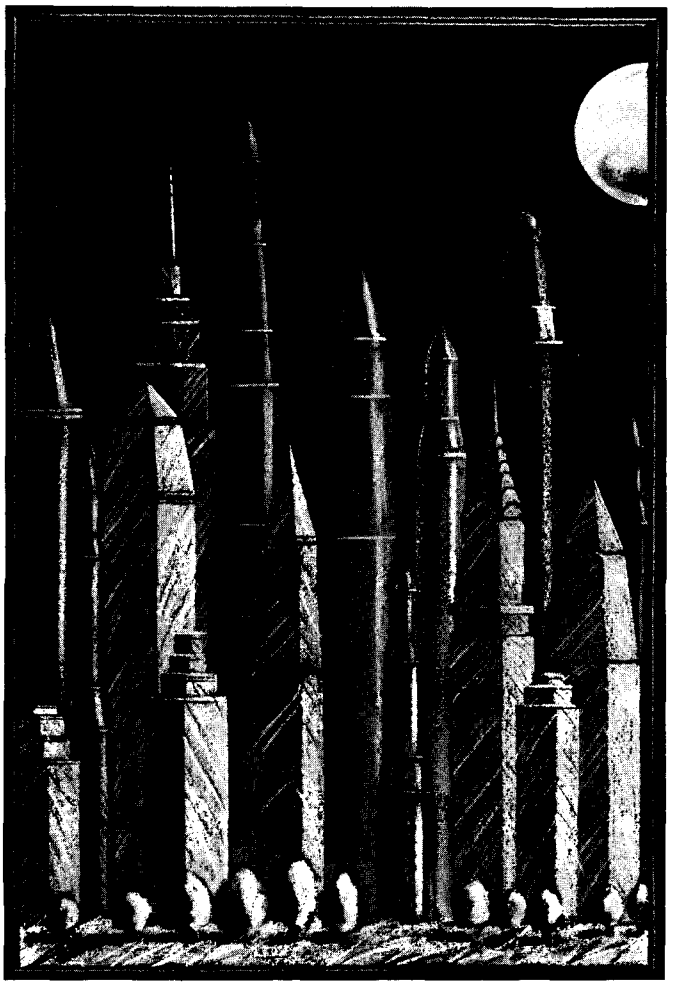

that large numbers of men and machines will perform exactly as planned. The weapons used in a first strike would have to perform reliably and very accurately, and the detonations of several thousand warheads would have to be coordinated with perfect skill, or else the whole scenario becomes immediately implausible. Yet no complex system ever works as predicted when it is first used. In carefully controlled tests, involving small numbers of weapons, it may be possible to attain the levels of accuracy required for a first strike, but I am convinced that the necessary levels of accuracy and reliability are simply not attainable in an operational force. It would require many more test flights than either nation normally conducts to get enough data to establish the actual facts about these systems. How many trial runs of a surprise attack could the U.S. or the Soviet Union carry out?

Three factors make it seem especially unlikely that a surprise attack could be successfully carried out. First, the accuracy of the attacking warheads is uncertain. Because their targets, the missile silos, are so greatly "hardened," warheads must come much closer to a silo than to "softer" targets to do damage. But it may be impossible for either side to know how accurate its warheads will be when they are fired in large fleets on a trajectory that has never before been tested.

Second, the reliability of the missiles themselves is open to deep question. Optimists assume that 80 percent of the missiles that are fired will perform satisfactorily. The likely rate may be closer to 50 or 60 percent. This would mean that even assuming maximum accuracy and accepting the formula that two warheads fired at a silo will have a 95 percent probability of destroying it, the Soviet Union might fire 2,200 warheads at our missiles and destroy only 500 to 600 of them.

Third, such an exercise would require prodigious feats of timing. It would involve very precise firings of the individual missiles, so that the two warheads attacking each Minuteman would be so perfectly spaced that the detonation of the first would not destroy the second, and warheads attacking neighboring sites would not disable each other. (These very probable accidents are known as fratricide.) A successful first strike would depend on flawless communication within the Soviet command structure. It is generally recognized that the command-and-control system is the weakest link in the nuclear forces of both sides.

In principle, the Soviet Union could improve its possibilities of success by firing more than two warheads at each missile, but then the potential for destructive interference becomes even greater, as do the complications of command and coordination. Most experts believe that two warheads per target is the practical limit.

All in all, the result is this: even after a surprise Soviet attack on the American Minuteman force, *U.S. strength would actually be slightly greater than the Soviet Union's.* If the Soviet Union could carry out the worst attack that the alarmists have been able to imagine, the United States would not only retain its relative position but would have enough nuclear weapons to destroy several Soviet Unions. And by the same logic, the Soviet Union would certainly retain the capacity to inflict unacceptable punishment on the United States, no matter how large and clever a surprise first strike the U.S. were to launch. Theorists may claim that it would not be "logical" for the side that had endured the first strike to order a retaliation, since that would lead to further devastation, but such forbearance on the part of a badly wounded but still armed nation is hard to credit.

Theorists defending the first-strike hypothesis often refer to the issues of the Cuban missile crisis. In 1962, the U.S. had many more nuclear weapons than the Soviet Union, and this superiority, many advocates of the MX now say, forced Nikita Khrushchev to back down. But in the early sixties, the Soviet Union had so few *deliverable* nuclear weapons that its leaders had legitimate reason to fear that a first strike might take away their ability to threaten destructive retaliation. The imbalance *may* have affected Soviet behavior—although American superiority in conventional naval forces seems to have weighed more heavily in the Soviets' calculations. At the comparatively low levels of nuclear weaponry of twenty years ago, a difference in size between the arsenals could have political

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significance; indeed, much of the impetus in American policy has been to regain the first-strike potential the U.S. enjoyed for many years. But when each side has a superabundance of weaponry, which is the case today, small differences in size no longer matter.

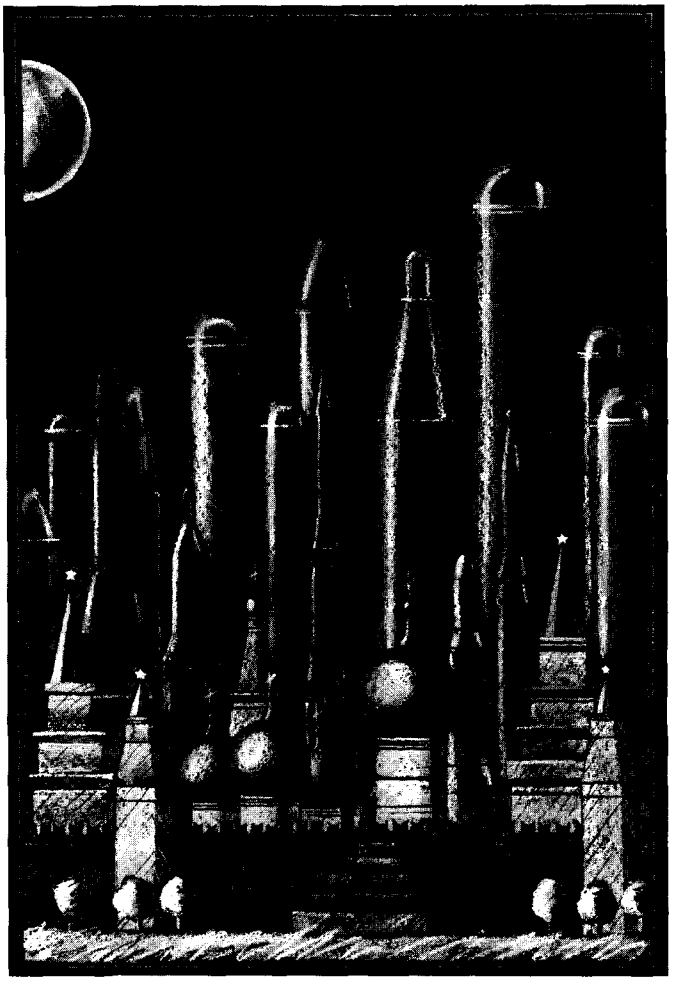
AT THE MOMENT, NEITHER THE U.S. NOR THE SOVIET Union has a meaningful strategic advantage. A window of vulnerability does not exist. Furthermore, it is almost impossible to imagine how either side could achieve a usable advantage. Both sides are thoroughly deterred from using their strategic forces, because a decision to use them would be a decision to commit national suicide. And this seems sure to remain true no matter what either side deploys in the way of new weapons.

Though the Soviets might theoretically increase the capacities of their missiles in such a way as to pose significant new threats to the Minuteman force, it would require a major breakthrough in both technology and production to do so. The same is obviously true for American forces. The MX and the cruise missiles based in Europe might be the American entry into such a competition. But at the moment, such capabilities do not exist and so cannot be deployed. Thus, now is the time for a disarmament agreement, one that would freeze all missile developments, leaving both sides with an unquestioned deterrent but without any plausible threat of a first strike. Now we have a "window of opportunity" for safer, saner alternatives to a major arms buildup. This might mean ratification of the SALT II agreement, whose limitations the Reagan Administration has so far chosen to observe, or a comprehensive freeze on the testing and development of nuclear weapons, which I favor.

An agreement to halt all testing of nuclear weapons, and of the vehicles that would deliver them, could dramatically change the political cloud that surrounds these weapons. Military technologists will strenuously resist the enactment of any such program. They will be reluctant to give up new weapons already in the pipeline. Moreover, they will maintain that if they cannot test-fire weapons, they cannot guarantee that they will work as planned. That is true, but scarcely a problem. While no one could be sure that the weapons would work as planned—which further reduces the certainty essential for a first strike—neither could anyone be certain that they won't work. They would not suffice for pre-emptive attack, but they would still represent a secure deterrent.

If this opportunity for arms control is not taken, the job will only grow more difficult in the future. The weapons of today are easy to count and monitor, but those of tomorrow won't be. The cruise missile, the stealth bomber, and far more accurate guidance systems would lead us to a nightmare world, one in which our fears would increase. That is why the opportunity must be seized now.

A limited solution to the arms race is not pleasing to many religious and ethical leaders who are emphasizing the immorality of relying on the very weapons that may threaten the extinction of the species. For contrary reasons, a nuclear-arms freeze irritates conservative political leaders, who imagine that this dimension of military force should somehow be made more "usable," and who object to a policy—deterrence—that places the civilian population of the nation at risk. Deterrence is unsatisfactory—except by contrast with the alternatives. The weapons that create the threat of annihilation cannot be uninvented. The sad fact of this era is that our populations cannot conceivably be protected except through political skill and courage applied to the task of minimizing the chances that nuclear weapons will ever be used.



Seizing this opportunity to freeze the arms race would be one demonstration of such skill and courage. It would free both sides from the fear of a first strike and would leave them with such security as a deterrent can provide. It would set the stage for further safety measures, including the reduction of nuclear forces. Meanwhile, the fear of unknown new weapons would be eliminated. And with less money devoted to strategic nuclear weapons, more would be available to repair the deficiencies in our conventional forces, to right the economy, and especially to work on the ever-growing set of civilian problems facing the world. □

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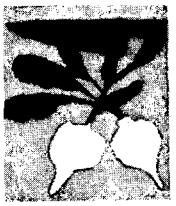
YOUNG POETS

ON THE FAILURE OF ALL LOVE POEMS

I think if love has any use for words
the contact's vague: fog touching the surface
of a lake, a blind man entering an unfamiliar room.
And if you dare to bring up the moon, taped
and re-taped like a poor kid's baseball
righteous groans begin to rise from the orchestra
(though they may be crying in the cheap seats)—
everyone knows the moon is all thumbs,
a place human shadows crumple into silt
instantly. What else then? The flowers,
of course the flowers and of course the music
of weekends, the reggae, the Ella, the Bach,
and the side trip to Champlain, which I thought
was ocean; the music of all huge waters.
Lunching on the pier, the paper blew from your
sandwich across the thin beach. When I
brought it back you said *love* again—
it was when we'd just started saying it.
What else then? The silent return to the
hotel, our bodies moving easy as planet
and moon, until I pointed to a tiny blue
flower growing from a sidewalk crack
and asked you, the botany major, its name.
I remember you laughed, and said it wasn't
your specialty—it was cultivated, and must
have gotten free somehow to have ended here,
wild and frail. You laughed, and didn't know.

—Jeffrey Skinner



BULL SLAUGHTER

All summer they have praised him
with sugar beets and hay,
given ground where he wanted ground,
water in his concrete trough,
silence and clear, cold mornings
he could fill with bellowing
and his breath drifting
shoulder-high over the fields.
But this morning the woman who fills
his trough stands far away,
hushing her children,
and behind her the man
who brings him sugar beets
kicks at nothing on the ground.
Other men in boots and aprons
watch him so intently that
all of his skin shudders.
They keep the distance he allows them
even now as they clap once
and his knees buckle,
even now as their hands cross
over and over the grinding steel,
even now as they bend down
and bless him with their sharpest knives.

—James McKean

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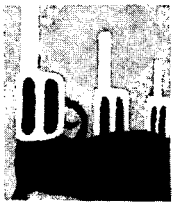
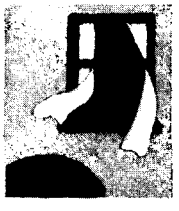


INSIDE THE GUN FACTORY

The smell of cutting oil
and the machine noise butcher
the senses. I run the gun
lathe, drilling barrels mated
to frames in final assembly:
a revolver is born today.
The run-out is within tolerance.
I soak the gun barrel in varsol.
This job gets under your collar
and uses your head like a revolver.

Everyone wants a gun.
You keep it oiled and the cylinder
spins easy. I have a
Ruger .38 snub. It cost me
only a song but that
doesn't mean I'll sing it.
A gun is thick and cold
like a black tuna I can conceal
beneath my coat. Don't mess
with me: I left it at home
stuffed in the keyhole, ready
to bark at my hairy touch.

—Edward C. Lynskey



AUGUST PHILOSOPHERS

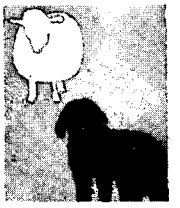
"Be generous," says the loosestrife,
flinging its common silks over the grass.

"Move on," says the stream,
through a mouthful of silt.

Across the street a little music school
opens its doors and windows to summer.

And seven children with shiny flutes
play "do," then "re," then "mi."

—Jane Flanders



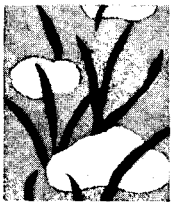
THE BENLLECH TRIALS

Recalling the dogs of Anglesey, ears perfect,
each animal tuned to a particular whistle and a hand
I go lost again in black and white shags of winter hair,
anxious statues steaming in the cool August afternoon.

A man in corduroy and plaid waves from across a field
one shrill note and then another punctuates the frozen air.
A dog moves. North
where a stone fence cuts a boundary tied with hedgerow

sheep are released. Stiff and dumb, they wait. They know
the dog will come. Both are born to reflex and pattern.
One moves as the other moves. We feel for our own mistakes,
behind the ropes, we find ourselves foreign and rooted.

—George B. Moore



COLLECTS

They would fit in my hand, all these stones,
so slightly they rest in the brown stubble grass;
I stare at them, thinking of great ladies' eyes;
as silent as secrets from heaven, they watch.

They are scattered and beautiful—how shall I gather them?
I touch one, I find two beside it.
I shall gather them wordlessly, glancing and turning,
grasping them just as they turn back to stone.

—Thomas Simmons

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Robert Lowell in Cambridge

LORD WEARY

BY JAMES ATLAS

WHEN I STEPPED OUT OF THE ELEVATOR ON THE tenth floor of Holyoke Center, in Harvard Square, one afternoon in the fall of 1968, the corridor was already crowded. Students leaned against the wall, sprawled on the crimson carpet, or stood around in clusters. I sat down on a bench near the elevator bank, away from the others; their eagerness put me off.

We were waiting for Robert Lowell. The year before, I hadn't been eligible for his advanced poetry seminar—Lowell accepted no freshmen—but this year I was sure he would be impressed with my "work" (as I had taken to calling it). Somber meditations on history in a time of crisis and on the predicament of Jews who never quite found a home in America, my poems addressed the big issues yet were movingly personal. I considered myself a good candidate.

The elevator doors opened, and Lowell emerged amid a coterie of graduate students, a Mafia don surrounded by his lieutenants. Leonard Wiggins, my freshman poetry instructor, was by his side. I rose to greet him, but he hurried past with a brusque nod, clearing a path through the crowd. Lowell shuffled down the corridor, an aging professor in a fullback's body, staring ahead with the prescient gaze of the blind. We pushed into the classroom after him, so many that we spilled out into the hall.

Lowell glanced around in bewilderment; his eyes, magnified by black-framed glasses, flicked warily from face to face. The students fell silent, like birds before an eclipse. His wrinkled suit hung from his shoulders as if it were a size too large. Flecks of spittle formed at the corners of his mouth. "I can only take ten or twelve of you," he said in a tentative voice that had a faintly southern accent. He winced beneath the bright panels of light in the acoustic-tile ceiling, and smiled through taut lips. "I'm sure everyone is qualified." We were to leave our poems with him, and he would post a list in Warren House before next week's meeting. That was all; he was making his way toward the door.

Well, at least I had seen him. Like a bird watcher elated by a rare sighting, I noted the characteristics I had studied on book-jacket photographs and in the *Time* cover story that had appeared the summer before I went off to Harvard. (I could still recall my excitement when I walked into Hoo's Drugstore in Evanston, Illinois, and saw the cover, with Sidney Nolan's portrait of Lowell wreathed like an emperor.) I had that sense of recognition one gets from seeing a celebrity in person; he seemed at once familiar and remote, someone I knew and someone different from other people by virtue of his known image. Our first glimpse of the famous is often disappointing; they seem diminished, ordinary. Lowell seemed, if anything, larger; he was taller than I had expected, and his corolla of whitening curls trailed back from his broad, marbled forehead.

I felt as if I had known him for years. I had been gathering Lowell's biographical lore since I was a sophomore in high school. I had read every reference work, every literary essay, every biographical note I could find; he was the greatest living American poet, so it was natural that I, an aspiring poet myself, should be curious about his life. I had read every book of Lowell's, from *Land of Unlikeness* and *Lord Weary's Castle* to *Life Studies*, that astonishing chronicle of his nervous breakdowns, his conflicts with his parents, his precocious, moody childhood. "I used to sit through the Sunday dinners absorbing cold and anxiety from the table"— I knew all about it.

Of course, Lowell, for all his complaints of belonging to a shabby, impoverished branch of the aristocratic Boston Lowells, was from another world. After all, what did that family have to do with the Atlases of Illinois and, before that, of Poland and God knows where else? This discrepancy troubled me; it was one thing for Lowell to write about himself and another for me, a mere boy, to go about denouncing my relatives and disclosing my wracked soul's every secret. My experience, however charged with significance I found it, could hardly have been more inconsequential in comparison with Lowell's. Even the proper names in his poetry—the Porcellian, Beverly Farms, Blue Hill in Maine—evoked a class so far beyond mine that I scarcely knew it existed. The names in *my* story—Eli's Delicatessen, the Skokie Indoor Tennis Club, Howard Johnson's Nassau Beach Lodge—were hopelessly suburban. How could I ever get poetry out of this unpromising material? It wasn't enough simply to *feel* the poignance of life, a poignance that graced even Evanston on humid August nights when I coasted on my bicycle through the lakeside parks, swerving up and down the graveled paths with an exalted heart. No, you had to move in a more

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privileged realm, I suspected, to get poetry out of life.

This is why I had gone to Harvard—to find that more authentic experience, to dwell in a literature-producing region. Never mind that Dreiser, James T. Farrell, and Nelson Algren had been inspired by Chicago, that Saul Bellow lived there now, or that in the early decades of the century there had been some kind of Chicago Renaissance. (I was amazed to learn from Henry James's *The American Scene* that he had visited Chicago in 1905 and been introduced to a literary salon; the only salon I knew was the beauty parlor in the Orrington Hotel where my mother had her hair done once a week.) Much as I loved Chicago, it was impossible to imagine actually living in that soot-coated city. It was the East that held out promise, the East where writers lived and wrote; it was the East that I dreamed of, the New England of Hawthorne, Emerson, Melville (or was he from New York? Anyway, you get the idea), the crucible of culture, a world with a tradition.

Tradition: what a significant word that was! I couldn't open my mouth anymore without complaining about its absence. Everything is new! I sneered, casting a cold eye on our Danish-modern living room. I was off to where the American past was visible, where the furniture in the common rooms was burnished to a dark patina. The summer before freshman year I had spent whole afternoons in a plastic-webbed lawn chair on our patio perusing the 1967 Harvard course catalogue. "The Romance in America"; "The American Novel from the Civil War to 1900"; "The Poet in America": I read this catalogue with the "wild surmise" of Keats looking into Chapman's *Homer* "like some watcher of the skies/ When a new planet swims into his ken."

But there was a still greater revelation in store for me, and that was the discovery that Harvard offered *writing* courses. Why, this was news! Here was William Alfred, the popular Harvard English professor I had read about in *The New Yorker*'s "Talk of the Town." And here was . . . "Mom!" I rose out of my lawn chair with a glad cry. My mother hurried to the door and looked out through the screen. "This is unbelievable! Guess who teaches poetry at Harvard? *Robert Lowell.*" I read aloud: "English Sa. Writing (Advanced Course). . . . The emphasis will be primarily on poetry. Not more than ten students will be enrolled."

"Only ten?" my mother said doubtfully. "That's not so many."

"Oh, for God's sake, Mother. How many poets can there be at Harvard?"

WHEN I ARRIVED IN CAMBRIDGE AND LEARNED that Lowell's seminar was closed to freshmen, I could scarcely imagine how I would get through the year. To console myself, I boarded the MTA, got off at Charles Street, and headed for 91 Revere Street, where Lowell had lived as a child. Standing before the "flat red brick surface unvaried by the slightest suggestion of purple panes, delicate bay, or triangular window-cornice," I was as disappointed as Lowell had been by its bland façade, which blended in with the other houses on the steeply descending street. For once I was unstirred.

I got no closer to Lowell that year. Now I was sweating out his decision. On the crucial day, I consulted the bulletin board in Warren House every few minutes until a secretary wandered in and tacked up the list. There it was! My name.

Elated, I rose in the Holyoke Center elevator that afternoon and hurried toward the seminar room—only to find it nearly as crowded as it had been the week before. There must have been forty people, perched on the broad windowsill or the metal-hooded radiator, sitting cross-legged on the floor among piles of coats and notebooks, or lounging by the door. Tutors and graduate students, local poets, elderly women with crests of billowing white hair and vein-threaded cheeks, a reporter with a notepad balanced on his knee: the list, I soon discovered, was a formality. Anyone could attend.

Lowell passed around copies of a poem—the ritual of poetry seminars—and asked who the author was. A girl with kohl-encrusted eyes and silver stars pasted on her cheeks raised her hand. Lowell nodded and began to read the poem in a low, droning voice—the same voice I had listened to on a Caedmon album in high school, sprawled on the carpet in my bedroom late at night, while the TV boomed up through the floor. His broad Boston accent blended with a southern drawl acquired during his undergraduate years at Kenyon, where he had been a disciple of the Agrarian poet John Crowe Ransom:

> The night when you became my lover,
> goats cavorted above the star-dappled sea,
> I saw the whitewashed villages whiten,
> the moon intensify its beam of light.

Lowell's hand, the fingers splayed, moved in circles over the page, as if he were conjuring it to rise off the Formica surface. "You feel this last stanza's almost a parody, it's so weird," he said. "You could almost say it's a satire on the genre." The girl gnawed a fingernail and lit a cigarette. "It reminds me of Swinburne's *'Cor Cordium,'* " Lowell persisted. "It has Swinburne's florid energy." He turned a mild, inquisitive face to the girl, tucking a feathery wisp of hair behind his ears. "Isn't that what you had in mind? It's a translation of an English poem."

"I guess so," said the girl.

"How do others feel about the poem?" A few tentative hands rose, but Lowell was studying it again. "Or you could have the goats cavorting first: 'Goats cavorted when you became my lover.'" Pleased with this variation, he tried another: "'The star-dappled sea cavorts . . .'" His eyes had a hectic glint. "Why doesn't someone else talk now?" he said softly.

"I wonder if that last image is really earned," ventured a boy in a motorcycle jacket. "I mean—"

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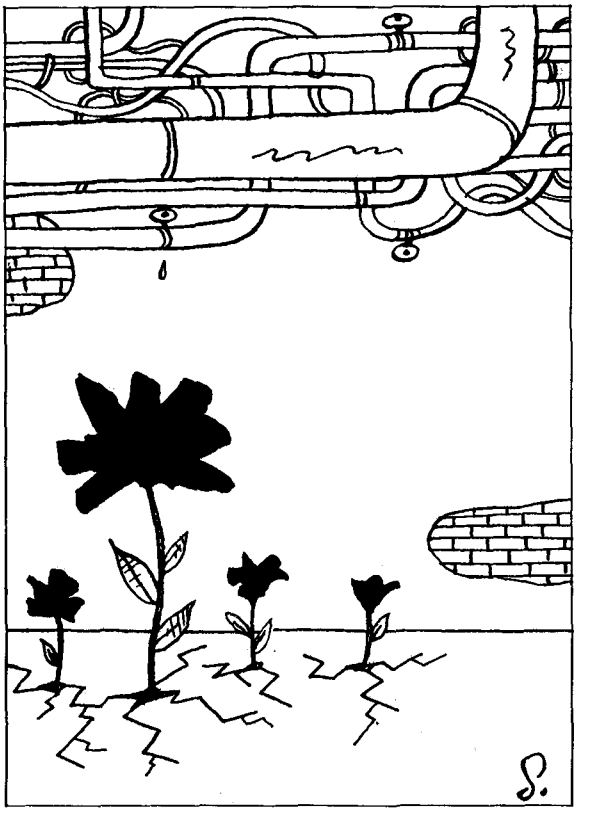
"But then you couldn't really say Swinburne." Lowell cut in, his hands circling above the poem. "It doesn't have Swinburne's lushness." He stared out the window, thinking hard. "And you could queer my argument by saying that it doesn't rhyme."

Through the picture windows that made up a wall of the room, the needle-like spire of Memorial Church divided the sky. A line of geese floated over the Yard. Lowell studied the poem for a while, then turned again to the author. "It's as good as Edna Millay."



Eventually we got used to these peculiar associations. Lowell would sit before the poem, seemingly transfixed by it, one cigarette cradled in his hand, another smoldering in the ashtray. Glancing up, he would suddenly offer some terse summation—"How many others in the room have grandfather poems?" he once asked after reading my contribution to the genre—or impossible advice: "Have you tried writing this in couplets?" "What if you made the speaker a priest instead of a young poet? Then maybe his sins would seem more real."

Lowell's interruptions seemed involuntary. Hunched down in his chair, smoke dribbling from between his thin, moist lips, his forehead shiny beneath the recessed lights, he would spin his manic fantasies, imagining how the poem would have gone if Wallace Stevens or T. S. Eliot had written it. Once, discussing a poem by an athletic, fresh-faced boy who stood out in that pale, needy crowd, Lowell peered intently at the page and stated, "You've been reading Hardy."

"Not really," said the boy, in obvious confusion. Wasn't Hardy a novelist? Then, not wishing to be impolite, he amended his answer: "I mean, no more than usual."

"But you could see these stanzas in *The Dynasts*," Lowell insisted. "Only with Hardy it would require eight hundred lines instead of eight." He leaned back in his chair and gazed at the ceiling. "You have Hardy's grim sense of humor—his enjoyment of misery. Fate was something he could mock at and not be called cruel." The boy stared at him like a tourist trying to make out a foreign language. "But then Hardy wrote his poetry out of genuine despair," Lowell mused. "You feel he wasn't so much inspired by his misery as driven mad by it." And then he was off on a long account of Hardy's two marriages, his reclusiveness, his cruel behavior toward his wives.

LOWELL GOSSIPED ABOUT the English poets the way other people gossip about their friends; he spoke of them as if they were colleagues and contemporaries, and thought nothing of disparaging them. "You feel that Arnold's trying too hard here," he remarked once, poring over "The Buried Life." "You'd almost say he wants to feel more than he does; the terse lines are there to goad on his emotion." It would never have occurred to me that Arnold could have tried too hard or pretended to feel more than he did; Arnold was only a name in the canon. He came after the Romantics and before Swinburne. He was represented in *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. But to Lowell he was a school inspector, a thwarted poet, a man who had once lived.

Lowell had the infuriating habit of devoting hours and hours of our precious class time to older poets—and I mean old. Bored with our unmetered cries of anguish, he would turn to a well-thumbed *Oxford Book of English Verse* that he carried with him, its dark-blue cover faded with age. "This reminds me of Wyatt," he would say quietly, contemplating one of our poems. (He never seemed ironic about these comparisons; to him, poetry was poetry.) Flipping through the compact blue volume, he would read with a weird, urgent lilt, his voice gathering tension, then dropping to a nearly inaudible murmur. The Elizabethan diction of "The Appeal" or "Forget Not Yet" was as natural in his mouth as a poem from *Life Studies*. Once he recited from memory Sir Walter Raleigh's "What Is Our Life?" and when he came to the last four lines—

> Our graves that hide us from the searching sun
> Are like drawn curtains when the play is done.
> Thus march we, playing, to our latest rest,
> Only we die in earnest—that's no jest.

—his voice grew rapt with terror. Eyes wide, he stared sightlessly out at the vision summoned up by Raleigh's words, a premonitory hallucination remote from our innocent classroom with its shiny Formica table and Fiberglas chairs, our heap of ski parkas and pea coats on the floor.

We listened dutifully to Lowell's monologues about these dead poets. Only why didn't he understand our unappeasable hunger to discuss our own work? Week after week, we entered the classroom tense with expectation; whose poems would be handed out this time? You could feel the

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frustration when the unlucky ones glanced down like poker players appraising their hands and learned that they would have to devote the next two hours to someone else's work. What bitter disappointment!

Lowell, though, was curious about our poems. Looking up from the mimeographed sheet before him, he would ask in his mild voice whose it was, then fix upon the author an uncertain scrutiny. The first time a poem of mine was discussed, read out in Lowell's quaking intonation, I could feel him trying to bring me into focus; it was clear he had never seen me before.

"It's an odd poem," he began, pawing the air like a blind man groping down a corridor. "It's all sensibility. You've written yourself back to the nineteenth century, to Baudelaire." He studied the poem, as absorbed as a scientist examining a slide, then read a line again: "'My wracked frame wastes on a Tangiers balcony.' You've told us that you're suffering, but not how or why." He gave me a kindly look. "And this pathetic fallacy: 'The stars' mad vacant stare'—it's too outlandish. The reader balks."

Was my poem pathetic, then, on top of everything else? And after so many years of waiting for this moment, waiting for approval from the highest authority in the land? A fallacy! Pathetic! I eyed the poem in disgust. "But I like its strangeness." Lowell broke in on my despondent reverie. "It's as if Keats had come out and told us how much he wanted to be a great poet." He smiled. "The poem's all about you, a good subject—even if it's a you that's entirely made up."

I didn't hear another word in class that day. Like a patient cut off by his psychiatrist at the end of the hour, I was uneasy, resentful; I hungered for more. My audience had ended all too quickly. I tried to remember everything he had said, but the message was ambiguous. Had I been compared favorably with Baudelaire? What about "sensibility"? Was that a good thing to have? My memory, cruelly accurate for once, restored the disparaging phrase: "all sensibility." But it was the word "pathetic" that tormented me the most; what a hateful idea. Not even "I like its strangeness" could cancel out that distressing epithet. (It wasn't until many years later that I came across Ruskin's discussion of "pathetic fallacy" in *Modern Painters*.)

I WAS HARDLY ALONE IN MY HUNGER FOR LOWELL'S attention. Everyone clamored for a share: the Brattle Street ladies who invited him to dinner; the undergraduates who clustered around him after class on the thinnest excuse—a late assignment, a clarification of some stray remark he had made about their work; the graduate students and tutors who accompanied him to the Faculty Club for a drink. Nothing dejected me more than to watch Lowell moving off down the sidewalk surrounded by his coterie.

Denied direct access to him, I cultivated his disciples. Leonard Wiggins had organized a workshop of his own, which met once a week in the basement of Kirkland House, and now that I was in Lowell's class, he invited me to join. It was in that dreary room, beneath plaster-swaddled pipes and next door to a quivering, ancient boiler, that I came to know the core of Lowell's Cambridge following, that handful of zealous graduate students who dined out and corresponded with the poet, even visited him in New York.

It was from Lowell's disciples that I learned the main details of his life: that he lived in New York and came up to Cambridge for two days a week; that he was married to the writer Elizabeth Hardwick; that he had a suite of rooms in Quincy House; that he was writing sonnets now. But they knew far more: the identities of the people mentioned in his poems; the variants of celebrated lines ("That poem used to have two more stanzas," Leonard would say, or "The *Sewanee Review* version was much better"); his itinerary at any given moment ("Cal's in London," or "Cal's campaigning with McCarthy").

I was greatly impressed by these knowing discussions, and envious of the casual talk about "Cal"—short for the Roman emperor Caligula, a prep school nickname that had stuck (with Lowell's own connivance, I suspected; I hadn't had any trouble getting rid of "Fatless," *my* nickname). To speak of Cal was to claim an intimacy with Lowell that forever eluded me; even later on, when I knew him well enough to call him on the phone, I would murmur with stilted English formality, "Is that Robert Lowell?" But Wiggins had clearly earned the right. "Cal read this poem aloud the other night, and thought it was one of my best," he would say; or, "Cal says you have to tinker with a poem until your eyes pop out of your head." The name in itself was poetry; it suggested a world one could know if one were only patient enough—a world in which great men were colleagues.

The other disciple of Lowell's I got to know that year was Winston Walker, a graduate student from New Orleans who attended the Kirkland House evenings and was writing a Ph.D. thesis on religious imagery in Lowell's early work. The son of an amateur historian from an aristocratic southern family, Walker had grown up in a household that must have been, from what he told me of it, as old-fashioned as mine was progressive. The strict father, the vine-covered house where servants glided noiselessly through the halls, the theological debates at the dinner table (Walker had converted to Catholicism while still in high school): had I read about such childhoods in Faulkner? I imagined Winston seated at a mahogany dining-room table, a Latin primer open before him, translating Catullus, while his father, behind a closed door in the upstairs study, put the finishing touches on a book about how the South could have won the Civil War.

However fanciful this image, it represented for me the rigor of Winston's character, its archaic formality. He was hopelessly awkward—I had once been riding with him in his old Chevrolet when he smashed a rear headlight trying

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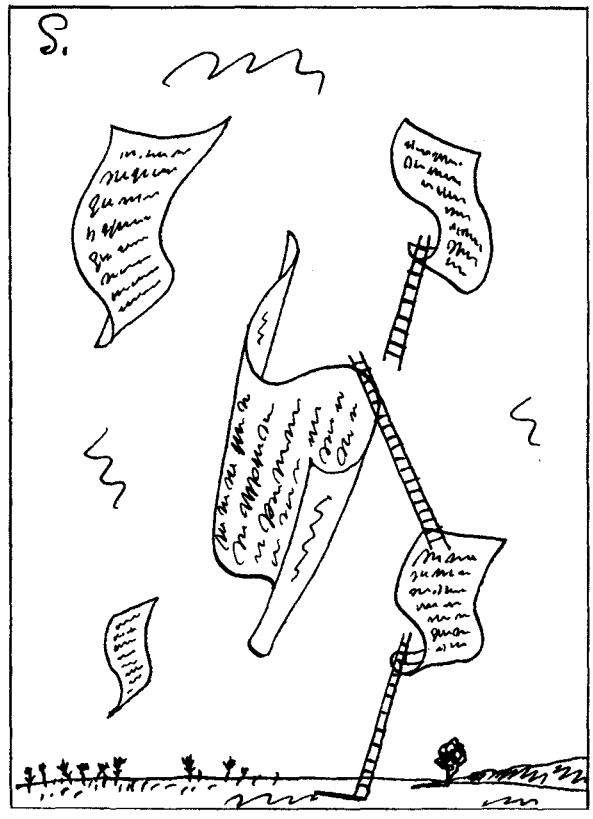
to park, then sideswiped two cars as he drove off in disgust—but somehow powerful; in his cream-colored linen suits and flesh-tinted glasses, he was at once vigorous and professorial, refined yet possessed of a nervous animal strength. Nowhere was this strength more evident than in his voice, a penetrating nasal whine that made heads turn. Once, while crossing a street together in Paris against the light, we were nearly run over by a Frenchman who leaped screaming from his Citroën; Walker protested in a sonorous drone that emanated like a mantra from deep within his diaphragm, "*Ça ne vous donne pas le droit de parler comme ça*"—upon which the driver backed off, gaping in astonishment, and drove away.



Nothing mattered to Walker but poetry; I never heard him mention a novel. On the rare occasions when he found himself in the company of people who didn't write, he sat with a drink in his hand and the nervous look of a patient in a dentist's waiting room, tossing back one highball after another. Fiercely impatient but too polite to interrupt, he crouched forward in his chair, as eager as a hunting dog about to be unleashed, and waited for a chance to bring the conversation around.

He was maddeningly thorough, and would go through some minor poet's oeuvre book by book, assessing the poet's development and reputation, concentrating on a thin volume destined for oblivion a laborious scrutiny that made me feel boorish for dismissing it out of hand. "How can you say that?" he would interrupt when I declared a poet "stupid" or "no good." "What about the sequence of poems on the death of his father in *Waiting Out the Winter*? There are some good things there." His impulse of fairness shamed me.

IT WAS WALKER WHO INTRODUCED ME TO LOWELL'S "office hours"—not voluntarily but by chance, when I happened to encounter him turning in at the gate of Quincy House one morning. He was on his way to see Lowell, as it happened, and had no choice but to invite me along. I followed him down a flight of steps, past a janitor's closet, and into a tiny, windowless cell with cinderblock walls, a scuffed linoleum floor, and a few metal folding chairs around an old wooden table. It was in this cheerless dungeon that Lowell spent every Wednesday morning from nine until noon. The procedure was no different from his Tuesday class, except that those who wished to have their poems discussed could volunteer. Anyone could attend, the only requirement being that one knew about the office hours in the first place; and since no one who did know was anxious to share the information, word didn't get around.

Promptly at nine, Lowell would shuffle into the crowded room looking hung over and pale, his forehead damp, a watery remoteness in his eyes. "Who has a poem?" he would ask shyly, lighting a cigarette.

I could never figure out why he submitted himself to this needless torture. Perhaps it was because so many of our poems were imitations of his own—a form of homage. The brutal candor of *Life Studies* was our model, Lowell's madness our literary myth. Every few semesters he had to be confined to McLean's, the Boston-area mental hospital described in his poem "Waking in the Blue." I had never witnessed one of these breakdowns, but I had heard about them in grim detail: Lowell showing up at William Alfred's house and declaring that he was the Virgin Mary; Lowell talking for two hours straight in class, revising a student's poem in the style of Milton, Tennyson, or Frost; Lowell wandering around Harvard Square without a coat in the middle of January, shivering, wild-eyed, incoherent. In the seminar room on the top floor of Holyoke Center, we waited nervously—perhaps even expectantly, given the status accorded anyone who had been present at one of these celebrated episodes—for it to happen before our eyes, watching eagerly for any manic soliloquys, references to Hitler, or outbursts of unnatural gaiety. These were the signs that Lowell had "gone off" and would have to be put away.

Encouraged by Lowell's willingness to write about such episodes, his disciples turned out confessions of madness, attempted suicide, and sexual miscreancy that made the revelations in *Life Studies* seem as tame as a country priest's confession. "When you slit your wrists," began a poem by a genial midwestern boy whose work Lowell admired, "the blood made a crimson gully on the floor." "I could feel his heart lunging like a rabbit flushed from cover" was another line I recall, from a poem in which a 300-pound diva laments the sudden death of her lover, seized by a fatal coronary as she rode above him on a couch in her dressing room. The day a thin, mild-mannered divinity

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student whose piping voice, disheveled beard, and wire-rimmed glasses made him a dead ringer for Lytton Strachey read out the dramatic monologue of a mass murderer of boys that began, "I was only happy when I had one in the trunk," I gazed around our cell in wonderment: just how many Loebs and Leopolds were there in this room?

My own poetry revealed few homicidal inclinations; the only violence I did was to the language. But in every other respect it was so close to Lowell's as to verge on plagiarism. Once I brought in a poem for discussion at office hours and Lowell read it aloud, interrupting with his usual digressions, until he came to the last line. Instead of reading it, he paused as if studying a word that he was uncertain how to pronounce, then said in his gentle, murmurous drawl, "I see you've taken a line here from one of my poems." I faced his unreproachful gaze, and suddenly Lowell's line came to mind, a line from which my own diverged by only a single word.

"Huh!" I said. "I guess it is a lot like it." I could feel myself blushing, and stared down at the poem, my head cradled in my fists.

"It's a good line," Lowell said kindly, and everyone laughed.

Even in my embarrassment, I felt a certain pride. The plagiarism had troubled him, I noticed, and to register in his mind, however fleetingly and under whatever conditions, was to exist. I used to walk back to my dorm from office hours calibrating the amount of attention I had gotten over the past three hours; every glance in my direction, every casual aside, was rehearsed and evaluated. "What do you think, James?" Hadn't Lowell turned and spoken those words? Hadn't he referred to me by name? My need to be noticed was obsessive—an obsession shared, I suspect, by many who came to class or office hours. Like cripples thronging about a healer, we longed to be anointed by the great man's recognition.

What was it that gave Lowell this gravity, this nearly shamanistic power? Perhaps it was that the one question that tormented everyone else had been decided for him: he had made it into the pantheon of great American poets. His work would last, while we were condemned to doubt; our poems were so provisional, so rudimentary that we despaired of ever giving utterance to what we felt. "Oh Lord, how beautiful must have been some of the faces trampled in the dust." I was moved by that lament, from an Urdu poem I had read somewhere, awed that so much effort might come to so little. "The unspoken question," Winston once confided, "is which of us will last." It reassured him that Keats had gone largely unappreciated in his lifetime, that Tennyson had been ridiculed by his early critics.

He was haunted by thoughts of immortality. But I was haunted by other thoughts—thoughts of oblivion. I wrote to preserve the memory of my own existence, to record for the sake of the dead their forgotten history. This vanished past was the only tradition I knew, and it was to thwart its terrible anonymity that I sat hunched over my desk night after night, turning out what Lowell once called my "Jewish homelife" poems: chronicles of my grandparents' arrival in America, the crowded households of immigrants on Chicago's West Side, the new prosperity and dispersal of children to the suburbs; the accumulation and divestment of carpets and looms and paintings and sideboards and gold-framed photographs. They were like geologic strata, these possessions and lives, each generation burying the previous generation deeper.

ELATED BY THE DISCOVERY OF OFFICE HOURS, REGular attendance at which had raised me above the common lot of the undergraduates in Lowell's poetry class, I was disappointed to find that there was still another, more privileged status—those who joined Lowell for lunch every Wednesday at Iruña, a Spanish restaurant in Harvard Square. It was with the keenest regret that I emerged from the Quincy House basement at noon on those days and lingered on the sidewalk while Lowell and his select group drifted off in a cluster. It was strange: no matter how old I was, there always seemed to be an "older crowd" around to exclude me. Just because I was twenty rather than ten made no difference in the humiliation I suffered as I made my way back to Dunster House and pushed my tray along the barred counter, peering in through the steamed-up glass at the metal bins heaped high with carrots and lima beans, mashed potatoes and Salisbury steak. I could still have been the boy unwrapping his bologna sandwich on a bench while sides were chosen for the scrub baseball game; still the seventh grader new to Evanston, trailing after the eighth-grade boys who smoked, carried switchblades, and slipped out to the luncheonette on the other side of the viaduct during lunch period; still the high school freshman trudging home after school, my Harvard bookbag crammed with work, while the upperclassmen hurried off to their extracurricular activities. Would there ever come a time, I wondered, scanning the Dunster dining hall for an unoccupied table, when I would belong to the "older crowd"?

One day, after a sparsely attended office hours, I noticed Lowell glancing around and realized that no one from the inner circle had shown up. Who would join him at Iruña? I happened to be sitting beside him—rather, I had arrived twenty minutes early and claimed the seat. Lowell registered my presence and said, "Let's have lunch." It was a command, but spoken in such a diffident voice that I scarcely heard him.

As we headed off down the street, I glimpsed one of the other undergraduates who had managed to find out about office hours. A burly, taciturn young man who specialized in dramatic monologues by martyred religious figures—Jan Hus, Giordano Bruno, Thomas More—he seemed capable of the violence the others only wrote about; there

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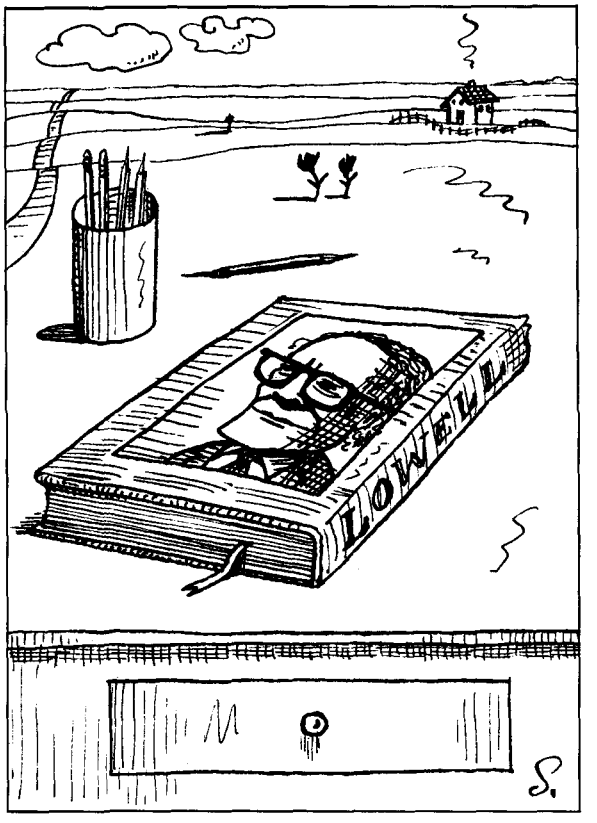
was a taut, furious shape to his mouth, and his blue eyes behind rimless glasses had an angry glint. He was angling toward us with a determined stride, his big shoulders thrown forward, as if he were muscling his way through a crowd.

I tried to hurry Lowell on, hoping to screen him from the intruder's view. But he came right up—and Lowell, the distracted, indiscriminate Lowell, invited him to join us. What the hell are you doing? I raged inwardly. How can you waste your time on this ominous character? I could scarcely restrain myself from seizing the intrusive poet and hurling him into the snow. But it was too late; he had fallen in beside us. Fuming, I kicked a stony lump of ice. The great event ruined! What was so special about having lunch with Lowell if this boorish lout, this lumpen bully, could push his way in? I was too exasperated to join the conversation or even hear what they were saying until we were seated at Iruña, and Lowell was filling our glasses with sangría. Oblivious of the malevolent stares we exchanged—the other poet was no happier than I at the prospect of having to share the occasion—Lowell posed his favorite question: "Who do you read?"



Some younger poets were mentioned, neo-surrealists with a weakness for hallucinatory images and weird, improbable metaphors. I knew Lowell didn't care for their work.

"Oh, I just don't believe them," I broke in. "Their poems aren't *about* anything. I mean, don't you get tired of all those speaking stones and streetlamps that turn into stars? It's become a style, the latest fashion." My voice quavered with vehemence.

Lowell lit a cigarette and caressed the tablecloth, smoothing out wrinkles and brushing away crumbs. He was in his element, ranking poets, assigning them their place on the ladder—beneath him, it was understood. Flattered as I was by his invitation, I had been anxious on the way over to the restaurant; how would I ever hold his interest or find enough to say? But I realized that it didn't matter; all one had to do was mention a few poets and he was off, judging, dismissing, now and then offering a shred of praise. This exercise could entertain him for hours. "Who else?" he would prompt during a lull in the conversation; or, "What about so-and-so?" Whenever a new name was introduced, he leaned forward eagerly, his hands spread out on the table, a glad look in his eye. "He's written two good poems," he would say in that mild but definite voice of his; and he would name and discuss them as if the poet's work were right in front of him, open to the page. I was amazed by how much he kept up with even minor poets; I don't recall ever hearing him say he didn't know someone's work.

"You think they're really so bad as all that?" My rude outburst had made Lowell more charitable. Why be the first to attack? "I find Norman interesting in his own small way," he said. "He's written some good poems." Lowell's eyes behind his glasses bulged. "Only you feel he has nothing to say."

I nodded—a victory for our side—and glanced at my sullen opponent, but he was busy gnawing the husk of a shrimp. Lowell signaled the waiter and ordered another pitcher of sangría. He hadn't touched his dish, an omelette in a cream sauce. The ashtray was heaped with bent and broken half-smoked cigarettes. Lowell wasn't one of those smokers who exhale in vigorous plumes; he smoked as if it made him ill. His skin had a mushroom-like pallor; his tie was streaked with ash. But he was talking with great energy now, recalling the time he and this poet had met. "He wanted me to come read in Milwaukee or somewhere like that against the war, but I'd already been to Washington and marched against the war, and felt I'd done my part." He gave an apologetic smile, as if asking us to absolve him; had he done the right thing?

Lowell had a way, I noticed, of soliciting opinions from his listeners in order to draw them out; it flattered us to know that our ideas mattered—though I couldn't imagine why they did. What difference did it make what I, a long-haired, unkempt boy in a worn corduroy jacket and Frye boots, thought of Pound's *Pisan Cantos* or the later Hardy? But Lowell was achingly well mannered. He was working his way through Yeats's whole career now, starting with the florid Pre-Raphaelite verse in *The Wanderings of Oisin* and moving brusquely through the various phases of his development, encouraged by an occasional nod or murmur of approval.

"I guess my favorite is 'Under Ben Bulben,'" I volunteered.

"Really?" he said in surprise, as if I were F. R. Leavis reversing an opinion put forth in *New Bearings in English Poetry*. "What is it that you like about it?"

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What, indeed? The only line I could remember was "Horseman, pass by!" God, why hadn't we been taught to memorize?

"Uh, it's such a mature statement about death," I babbled, reaching for my glass. My brutish colleague probably knew the whole poem by heart, and half the plays! But he too was silent. Couldn't Lowell understand that others simply didn't live for poetry the way he did? We had been sitting here for an hour comparing Dryden with Pope, Coleridge with Wordsworth, Edward Thomas with Wilfred Owen, and the two pitchers of sangría had made inroads on my attention. It seemed odd to be drunk in the middle of a winter afternoon, with the ice-etched windows glinting in the sun. Ecstatic as I was to be in Lowell's company, I felt groggy from alcohol and talk; and besides, I was eager to get word out about the momentous event. How could any experience, even this one, compare with the joys of reporting it? To refine, elaborate, revise what happened, to polish and edit the afternoon . . . I could hardly wait to get out of there. "Guess who I just had lunch with?" I heard myself saying over the phone. (No need to mention what's-his-name in these accounts; from now on it was Lowell and me.) "He was fascinating, just incredible. He's every bit as brilliant as he is in class . . ."

But Lowell, done with English literature, had started in on the poets who came to office hours. "I find Bennett's poems too much like mine," he said benignly. "You wonder where he can go from here." Bennett Lamsdon was one of Lowell's most devoted disciples, and had written several essays on his work. I was surprised that Lowell had reservations about him. He admired Bennett's poems and had even recommended him for a fellowship. "I mean, he's very good," Lowell said, turning to me with the look on his face of a child caught drawing on his bedroom wall, "but can you really get away with some of what he gets away with in a poem? Or can you say anything now?" There was a slyness in his eyes that dared reproof. No one had challenged him in years, I was sure, apart from a few easily discredited critics, and he must have grown bored at times by adulation. His disloyalty was a game, a way of diverting himself.

Of course, it was a game that required another player, someone to feed him names. "What about Leonard Wiggins?" I said. He had gone out to California for the semester and "been through a lot of heavy changes," he reported in a letter I now quoted to Lowell.

"Yes, I gather he's brimming with revolutionary zeal," Lowell said, leaning forward to concentrate on my words. (What a keen pleasure that was!) He loved news of anyone he knew. "I like his early poems, but I can't follow what he's writing now. You wonder if there isn't too much California in it." (He always switched from "I" to "you," as if attributing his opinions to someone else.) I introduced another name. "His poems are grotesque, too truthful," Lowell said. And of an undergraduate whose work he had praised in class: "She has a schoolgirl's bright enthusiasm, but you feel she hasn't lived."

Everyone did this, I reflected as we left the restaurant. How many of us would choose loyalty over the chance to say what we really thought—or even to display our wit? And how often I disparaged my own friends just for the sake of camaraderie, for the atmosphere of good fellowship that agreement about the failings of others invariably produced. There was no reason why Lowell should be any less vulnerable or calculating than anyone else.

Yet the deference, the gentle drawl, the bowed head, were no pose: they were the visible signs of his ordeal. That he had been through so much was intimidating and made people shy away from him. One evening I spotted him at the Boston Athenaeum, where a young painter who had attended office hours on occasion was giving a slide show of his canoe trip through Alaska. Sitting in the dark among that crowd of ruddy-faced Bostonians, I wondered what Lowell made of the seals and caribou, the trout surfacing on ponds, the vistas of barren tundra that flashed on the screen; it was all so remote from his populous, incident-crowded, human world. Afterward, when the lights came on, he made straight for me, glad to see a familiar face.

More often he was oblivious. I used to see him shuffling down Massachusetts Avenue in his crepe-soled rubber boots. One afternoon, loitering by the magazine rack in the Pangloss Bookshop, I looked up to find him staring in the window, cupping a hand against the glass. I nodded and smiled, hoping to be noticed, but the face squinting with a wrinkled brow at the dust-flecked books registered nothing. He didn't know what he was looking at, I realized; his mind was elsewhere—circling, I imagined, the thought of death that had come to haunt his poetry. It wasn't that he thirsted to live; then only in his early fifties, he seemed wearier than anyone I had ever known. It was that he couldn't believe he would ever die; he had seen and known and felt so much. His bleak eyes in the sunlight were moist, as if he were holding back tears. □

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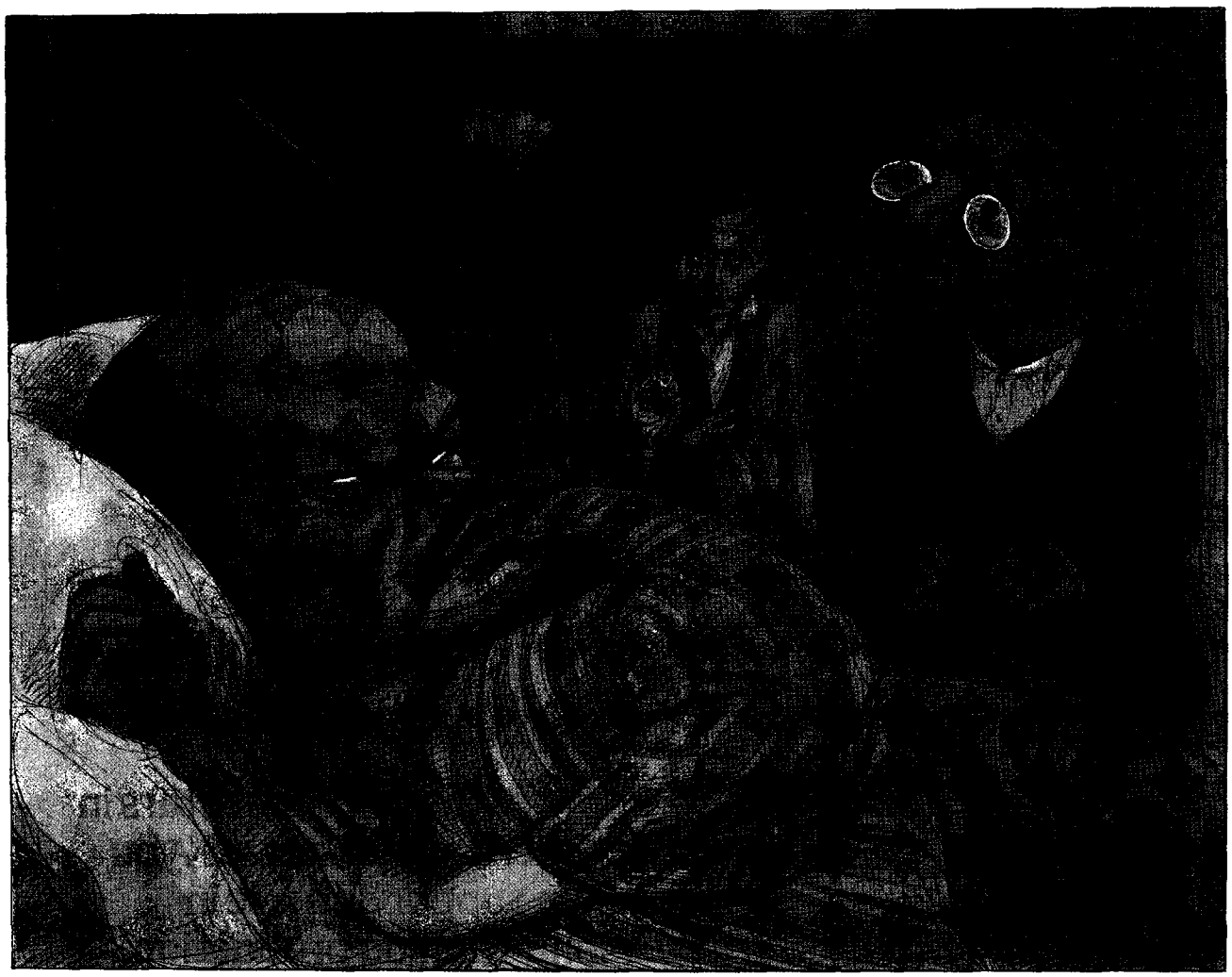

FIRST ENCOUNTERS

LENIN AND TROTSKY

Vladimir Ilich Ulyanov, alias Lenin, was still asleep when Lev Davydovich Bronstein, alias Trotsky, plunked himself down on his doorstep.

It was October of 1902; the place, London; the hour, dawn. Both men were in exile; both were alumni of the czar's prisons in and out of Siberia; both had escaped; both were totally immersed in and dedicated to the Marxist revolutionary movement, of which Lenin, at thirty-one, was the acknowledged head. His current command post was London. A number of his compatriot revolutionaries had congregated there, crowded into communes; Lenin, however, lived apart. So many people, he said, affected his nerves. He and his wife, Krupskaya, occupied a flat in one of the seedier neighborhoods (not far from the shabby rooms where, nearly a half-century before—surrounded by wife, mistress-servant, brood of children, and horde of creditors—the apparently nerveless Karl Marx had produced *Das Kapital*).

Trotsky was twenty-two years old. Papa Bronstein, a barely literate Russian-Jewish farmer, had educated him to become an engineer; my son the revolutionary was not what he had in mind. Nor were the sojourns in the prisons of Odessa, the marriage to a gentile woman ten years his senior, the two children born in the Siberian tundra. From Siberia, Trotsky wrote in secret the fiery tracts on Marxist theory that found their way to London, earning him the sobriquet "the Pen" and a summons from Lenin.

Trotsky arrived penniless. Despite the hour, he took a cab to the address jotted down on a scrap of paper. Krupskaya answered the prescribed triple knock in her nightclothes; Trotsky hardly noticed, concerned only that she addressed him in Russian (he spoke no English) and that she could pay for the taxi. Lenin, she explained, was still asleep. He had trouble falling asleep nights—would lie in bed for hours reading French grammars to calm his nerves. But Trotsky was expected. She ushered him unceremoniously into the bedroom. "Vladimir Ilich," she said, " 'the Pen' has arrived." —*Nancy Caldwell Sorel*

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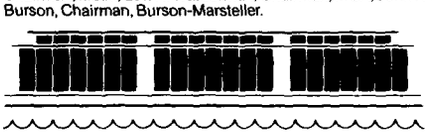

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SOME IN THEIR BODY'S FORCE

A SHORT STORY
BY NICHOLAS DELBANCO

Some glory in their birth, some in their skill,
Some in their wealth, some in their body's force;
Some in their garments, though newfangled ill;
Some in their hawks and hounds, some in their horse . . .

—Shakespeare, Sonnet XCI

IN THE SPRING OF HIS JUNIOR YEAR AT COLLEGE, PETER Danto fell, as he put it, in lust. It was 1962, and he had turned nineteen; he was trying on his attitudes like clothes. That spring he wanted a life in the theater. He played supporting roles in *Major Barbara* and *Othello* and Jean-Paul Sartre's *The Flies*. In this last play, he portrayed King Aegisthus—jaded, motivated not so much by desire as by reason.

Clytaemnestra was acted by a girl named Inger; she was attending Radcliffe for a year. He had heard rumors about her. She had that glacial blonde beauty supposed to be characteristic of Swedes, and she was rich. Her father was variously reported as a prince, a chancellor of the university, the designer of Volvos, and a shipping magnate. She was the Ping-Pong champion of Europe, the youngest of seven sisters. She carried a gun in her purse, it was whispered, and she was slated to marry a duke when she went home.

The director said he wanted her for Clytaemnestra because of her accent. The director was of the opinion that the cast should know why they had been chosen; he went around the table, discussing attributes. According to his, the director's, opinion, the Queen should be an alien presence in Argos. It was a play about pretension and unpretentiousness; Inger had the latter quality, he said. The director wanted *The Flies* to be about estrangement, and he repeated this often.

Her face was round and soft, her feet were bare. She was high-breasted and slim-hipped; she wore a green-striped tank top and white skirt. Her laugh came easily. They read through their parts without stopping, and Peter focused—in the intervals when Aegisthus was silent—on Inger's legs: the way they tapered to her ankles, the muscularity, the hint of less-firm flesh above the knee. He invited her for coffee; she said yes.

There was a coffee shop nearby called "Casablanca"; photographs of Bogart, Ingrid Bergman, and Sidney Greenstreet lined the bar. Boccherini emerged from the walls. Peter and Inger selected a table in a green bower of plants. He discoursed on the Oresteia, its relevance to the Vichy government and Nazi-occupied France. Sartre's text belonged, he said, to the literature of resistance: it was an inquiry into power, a parable of usage and abuse.

They ordered cappuccino. She watched wide-eyed. He would remember the components of that instant: lamplight, music, the Danish pastry, the speculative intensity with which they disagreed. When she shook her head for emphasis, her yellow hair cascaded. Reaching for the sugar, he grazed her hand with his hand. "*Du schwarzer Zigeuner,*" she said.

"What does that mean?"

"You dark gypsy. '*Ach,*'"—she hummed a phrase—"'*Du schwarzer Zigeuner.*'"

"Tell me about Uppsala."

Nicholas Delbanco directs the Bennington Writing Workshops. His most recent book is Group Portrait: Conrad, Crane, Ford, James and Wells.

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"There's little to tell," Inger said. "We have a house like you'd imagine: many windows with flowerpots. Fir trees by the balcony."

"Do you miss it?"

"A little."

"Right now?"

"My father's very serious," she said. "You, Peter, are you serious?"

"I'm a bad actor," he said.

She disconcerted him by taking this at face value; he had assumed she would smile. "Then why do you do it?" she asked.

He drank. "I don't know, really."

"For fun," said Inger. "To show you're not my father."

She smiled. Her front teeth were uneven. They talked about their roles. Peter said that killing Agamemnon had been, in Clytaemnestra's case, not so much a matter of sexual passion or envy as an *acte gratuit*. It all hinged, he maintained, on whether Agamemnon had slept with Clytaemnestra before his ritual cleansing in the bath. If she killed him after sex, there might indeed have been a passionate revulsion. But if she killed her husband while he washed, the knife-thrust was dispassionate. The text suggested that this was so: Agamemnon's feet were smelly, his hair unclean. So he was prinking up for purity—getting ready, making certain not to mess the carpets. Offstage, Cassandra was being gang-banged by the palace guard.

Inger swallowed. Foam from the cappuccino flecked her upper lip. He was making it all up, of course, aroused by her attention. He felt reckless and inventive; he asked about her sisters and she told him she had none. When they parted for the evening, she pressed against him briefly—and they agreed to meet again after rehearsal that week.

Peter lived in Adams House. His room had bay windows that gave on a courtyard, a sleeping alcove, and a bathroom lined with tile. There was what once had been a functioning fireplace; the walls were wood-paneled. He could pretend to independence once inside the door, but the foyer of his entry was a trial. She printed her name in block letters on the sign-in sheet. Laundry was being delivered on the second floor. Inside, he kissed her several times. Inger was suddenly shy. He fumbled with her buttons while she sat on the bed.

"Be careful," Inger said.

Her body was thin, her breasts small. She said, "I want some music," and he played *Leon Bibb Sings Love Songs* on his new stereo set. At "The Water Is Wide" he took off his shoes, and during "Down in the Valley" he removed his shirt. He was self-conscious about this, since he had many pimples on his back. When she closed her eyes, he closed his also, in gratitude. They kissed again, and some seconds later he opened his eyes to find her watching him. They smiled. When he pulled back her hair, her face had a baby's smooth roundness, and the small hairs at her neck were white. He said, "I want to be with you," and tugged off her skirt. He took off his pants and lay down.

Leon Bibb completed "Dance to Your Daddy" and began again. His voice was high. Peter penetrated Inger; she was unresistant. She was not helpful, however, and seemed to be in pain. He asked her if she was worried, and she shook her head; he asked her was it safe for him to be inside her, and she said she took the pills. He asked her was she happy being on his casting couch, and she tried to smile. He pretended expertise.

When they finished, she said, "I want to shower."

"I'll join you," Peter said.

In the shower she sang to him, softly. What he thought of as her high spirits returned. She soaped him, and they pressed up against each other, and he said Aegisthus had a better time than Agamemnon in his bath. "It'll be better next time," he said.

"What will?"

"The sex. It's always an improvement the second time."

This was not a statement he could verify. Inger placed the soap back in the soap dish, rinsed herself off, and stepped out of the stall. By the time he too emerged, she was dry and collecting her clothes.

"Is something wrong?" he asked.

"No."

"What is it?"

" 'It'll be better the next time,' " she said.

"I'm sorry."

"You make me feel foolish."

"No."

"Could you *please* turn off that record?" Inger asked.

He could not bring himself to say the line was borrowed, that he had read it in a book. "We have to get to rehearsal," he said.

"Yes."

"Are you hungry?"

She shook her head.

"Will I see you again?"

"At rehearsal," she said.

HIS DAUGHTER WENT TO SCHOOL IN ARIZONA. THEY had argued lengthily as to whether she should go that far, whether she was old enough or really had to leave. The local school system was so destructive they had no choice, Judy said; peer pressure to fail was too great. She was learning nothing but the names of drugs and cars. "One more year like this," said Judy, "and our little darling will have her own little darlings. We've got to get her out."

So they sent her to a boarding school in the suburbs of Tucson. The admissions officer admired Lucinda. "She's one tough cookie, isn't she?" he asked. Peter felt forced to agree. She was thick-tongued and torpid, who had been his quicksilver child. She fell in love, that first semester, with a horse named Bill. She wrote detailed descriptions, with

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photos enclosed, of Bill at rest and eating, of Bill in his stall or by the river, in the mountains, with the ribbons that she won for riding him in novice class.

By spring she was no novice, and Peter ordered a thousand-dollar saddle. He bought her boots and a coat and cap and tack; he sent her books on dressage. Judy said he was being extravagant, doting from a distance, and Peter agreed. But he preferred to picture her in stalls rather than in the back seats of cars; he'd rather that she mucked about with horses than with punks. Lucinda called on his birthday and said, "Bill loves you too."

"We haven't met," said Peter.

"No. But you should see him, Daddy. With that saddle."

"Yes."

"He's got you to thank. So we both wish you happy birthday."

"Thank you, darling."

"I'm going to buy him," she said. "Right now he belongs to the whole school."

"I'm on the upstairs phone," said Judy. "Buy *who*?"

"With the money Nanno left me. I can do what I want with it, right?"

He shifted the receiver. "I'm not sure Nanno meant it that way."

"Bill's mine," she said. "He knows it, too. He just despises it if any other girl gets on. That Missy Tief, for instance."

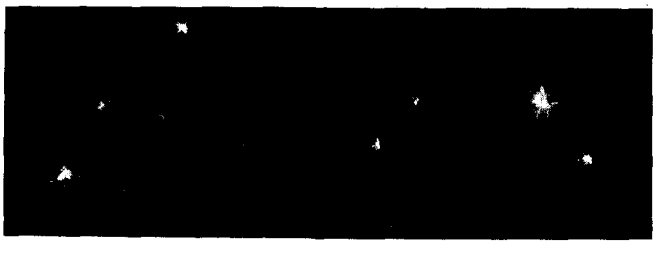
"It's your father's birthday," Judy said. "Not yours. We'll discuss this later."

"Happy birthday, Daddy."

"Yes."

"I'll see you in three weeks."

"We miss you," Peter said.



HE HAD BROKEN HIS ANKLE; HE WALKED WITH A cane. He had fallen down the office stairs. Since he was vice president of an insurance agency, this called forth humor from friends. "How about your coverage?" they asked. "Does it cover your own office? What's the policy on sliding down a banister instead?"

The stairs were wide and smooth, no obstacle. He traveled them ten times a day. Later he would ask himself what had distracted him, what whiff of springtime in the air or birdsong or engine caused him to fall. He landed unevenly; his right ankle buckled and he heard a single popping sound. He lay there, then built himself back to his feet. He could not put weight on the foot. He stood, leaning against the wall of the building, feeling the brick, balancing, waiting for what seemed a rainstorm to subside. There was no rainstorm, but there was a roaring in his ears, and the air went cold. He sat. His head dropped to his knees. He spent some time trying to decide whether his head had dropped to his knees involuntarily or whether he had lowered it on purpose. Blood coursed through his head. It seemed palpable, a liquid he could see with his eyes closed.

The village of Sandgate, in the Berkshires, their home, celebrated Memorial Day. Peter took his son to the parade. Sam was nine, excited. They had an invitation to Mrs. Welling's porch. They walked together from West Street to Main Street, slowly. "Do you miss your sister?" Peter asked.

Sam shrugged.

"Having someone to go to the pool with?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"She never takes me."

"This summer she will," Peter promised. "And she'll teach you tennis, too."

"I bet."

"She plans to," Peter said.

"Do you think you'll play tennis again?"

His cane was ebony, with a steel tip, and intricately carved. He flourished it. "Of course."

"I want *you* to teach me," said Sam.

"I'll come along. I'll be coach."

"She'll probably go horseback riding."

"Well, I want to see her."

"I don't."

Larry Welling, Jr., waited on the porch. Larry was fifty, a bachelor. "How's the leg?"

"It's mending," Peter said. He settled himself on a chaise longue. "They've cut me out of the cast."

Larry was a large man, blockish, fond of fishing; his hair was white. Sandgate perched on the Cold River, along the Mohawk Trail.

Mrs. Welling appeared. "You handsome man," she said. "You sit right there."

He put a hand on Sam's neck. "The boys' day out," he said. "We're giving Judy a rest."

"Good morning," Mrs. Welling said to Sam. She poured lemonade. "Could I interest you in this?"

"Say 'thank you,' " Peter said.

"Thank you."

She was seventy-seven years old, she told anyone who asked, and just as much inclined to dance as way back when; if you asked her to go waltzing she'd be happy to accept.

Sarah Beame closed the screen door. The porch required paint. "How's Judy?"

"She's on a diet."

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"Oh? Which one?"

"The Scarsdale one," said Sam. He perched himself on Peter's chair. "The one where the doctor got killed."

The adults laughed. Volunteer firemen assembled. The bowling-team captain was Sam's teacher, and he noticed Sam and waved. It had rained that morning, and the lawns were wet. The sidewalk glistened, and Main Street was washed, expectant.

Mrs. Welling offered pie. "I'll cut a piece for Judy, too. You take it back to her."

"Lemon meringue," Peter said. "She'd shoot me."

Bill Peaslee walked up the steps. He stretched, then took a seat. "How'd you do last night?" asked Larry.

Bill drew his index finger sharply past his throat. "Birds," he said. "I never did like to bet birds."

"Dogs, though. Now that's another thing."

"Not me. I got no stomach for it." Bill sighed. "I take a lady to the track, and if they're racing dogs, why then I'll sit on my hands."

Mrs. Welling turned to Sam. "You eat this piece we saved for your mother, okay? Or have some gingersnaps."

Sam took two. A labrador barked in its sleep. A girl walked by in white thong sandals; the light outlined her legs. Sam went "oompah, oompapah" and leaned out over the rail. Peter felt a spasm of excitement, a sudden lifting. The girl smiled—at him, possibly, or at the tableau on the porch. They were at home here; this was home; he accepted coffee in dead Mr. Welling's own cup.

PETER AND INGER WENT WALKING TOGETHER ONE Thursday; it was a fine spring day. They walked through Cambridge streets and then the Mt. Auburn Cemetery; fresh flowers were everywhere and many people were visiting. They looked at marble griffins and studied the inscriptions on the more imposing crypts. Inger was familiar with the creed of Christian Scientists. Mary Baker Eddy was supposedly not dead, she said, but just asleep; a telephone was supposed to be kept near the grave. When Mary Baker Eddy woke up and wanted something, the only thing she had to do was make her wishes known.

They found themselves in streets he did not recognize, with family grocery stores and plumbing shops and bars. They continued. The sun was hot. He was wearing old, torn clothes, and his hair was long; the crowd looked at him with disdain. Men stared at Inger openly, and some of them whistled and snickered. He heard a drum roll down the street, the sound of trumpets, and then a band playing.

"Where are we?" Inger asked.

"Watertown, I think."

"So many people here," she said. "For lunch."

Men sold balloons and ice cream; there were crepe-paper garlands on the lampposts. Men waved flags. "I just remembered," Peter said. "It's Memorial Day."

The sound increased. There were floats and police cars and, in the nearing distance, the sound of piccolos. She clapped her hands delightedly. "Let's watch."

They took positions by a fire hydrant. Policemen on motorcycles rolled past. The queen of the parade was draped in red, white, and blue. Her float was flower-strewn. She twirled a baton in her left hand and blew kisses with her right; she switched hands as she drove by Peter and Inger and, for a moment, lost the beat. There were horses and firemen and men from the Rotary Club walking in business suits; there were Boy Scouts in uniform, and Little Leaguers with the name of their sponsors on their backs. Men held banners and wore sashes reading "United Way."

"Do you want a hot dog?" Peter asked.

"A what?"

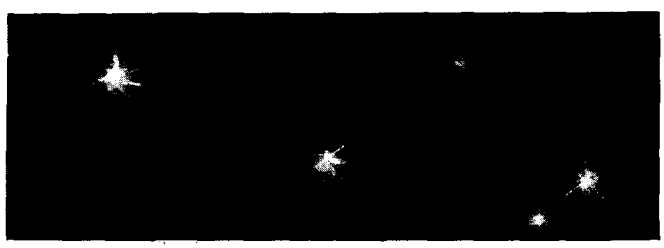
"A frankfurter," he said. "A little sausage in a bun."

She laughed. "I know what a hot dog is, silly. I didn't hear your question."

"Well, do you want one?"

"Yes."

He tried to attract the vendor's attention but failed. The man pushed on, clanging his bell. Then the sky went dark. It was without significance, a single shadow, yet the scene in front of Peter darkened in aspect also. Something triggered a storefront alarm. Inger wore a white dress that buttoned to the waist, with mother-of-pearl buttons and a ruff of eyelet lace. He was with a foreign woman while the Veterans of Foreign Wars paraded down Main Street. He himself was alien, a make-believe gypsy whose pockets were full. He took Inger by the elbow and stepped back.



"HOW WAS IT?" JUDY ASKED THEM.

"Fine."

"Did you enjoy yourself?" She took Sam's coat.

"Mmm. I'm hungry."

"Didn't Daddy get you anything?"

"Just pie."

"And gingersnaps," said Peter. "And lemonade."

"I'm *still* hungry."

"Yogurt," Judy said. "That's what we're having for lunch."

"With honey and raisins?"

"With raisins," she said.

Judy was polishing silver. She did this when dieting in order to keep out of the kitchen and still keep her hand in,

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she said. Today she was so hungry she could eat the knife.

"'I eat my peas with honey,'" Peter said. "'I've done so all my life. It might taste kind of funny, but it keeps them on the knife.'"

"Did you thank Mrs. Welling?" she asked.

"We did."

"And how was the parade?"

"Fine."

"Not long enough," said Peter.

Judy turned back to the spoons. She had demitasse spoons and soup spoons and tea spoons and serving spoons on the table in the dining alcove; she had completed the forks.

"Can we go swimming?" Sam asked.

"Not now."

"But Tony's going swimming."

"I can't take you," Peter said. "And your mother's busy."

"How's the leg?" she asked him.

"All right. I sat and watched things, mostly."

Tony Neff appeared. His parents had decided that they couldn't go to the pool, but could they go out in the woods? Peter cored an apple, offered a portion to each of the boys—giving his son, scrupulously, the smaller piece—and said yes. They ran to their fort in the woods. Peter watched them as they cartwheeled down the slope: motion unrestricted. He moved to where his wife was sitting, leaned down, and kissed her hair. "How was your morning?"

Judy set the rag and polish on a serving tray. "I have a headache," she said.

"Maybe it's the silver polish."

"No. This diet."

"You look terrific," he said.

"Five more pounds. Five more and I'll weigh what I weighed when we married."

"Five *less* pounds."

"You know what I'm saying."

"I love you."

"Yes."

He lowered himself to a chair. "Let's take a trip."

"Where?"

"Anywhere," he said. "Sweden, maybe. Or Norway. I've never seen a fjord."

His failure to have seen a fjord seemed, for an instant, serious. Peter closed his eyes. Mrs. Welling had been affable, solicitous. She had walked them to the intersection at the bank.

THE FAMILY WENT TO PRINCE ISLAND IN JULY. THEY rented a house on the north shore; theirs was a private beach. Judy had spent summers on the island in her childhood, and she said the place was magic still, a panacea for each ailment of the soul. She meant that sentiment, she said, although it might sound overwrought. They had proven lately that sunshine makes a person cheerful, whereas clinical depression can be induced by the dark.

Who proved that? Peter asked, and she said psychologists. Sociologists, he said, or physiologists, maybe, but it sounded wishful to him—the kind of attitude induced by skillful advertising, a tourist bureau somewhere that needed to drum up new trade. Well, anyway, she said, this island is my magic place, it's everything *I* need. It's long days lazing on the beach, and fish, and gin-and-tonics on the porch at sunset, a chance to play Scrabble and dream.

Helicopters buzzed the coast. Peter listened to the radio. Men stood by the wharf, surf casting. They had waders on, or bathing suits; they had Styrofoam coolers, and beer. Where fish broke the water, or birds gathered, or where there was a sudden darkness, men cast; they stood for hours, smoking, catching nothing he could see. Sometimes a rod would stiffen and bend; there would be a flurry of adjustments, a palpable attention. Then the line would part or the rod go slack, the fisherman would bring in a piece of dripping wool or wood.

Peter watched. He himself was thick-fingered; he had no desire to fish. But something in the manner of the men at the tide line arrested him; they had an equilibrium and purpose he lacked. They were hunting something and it did not matter if they caught it, yet it mattered how they caught it and how they passed the time. They focused on procedure with the passion of initiates. He lay and drank and dozed. He was healing, he assured himself; he had been more tired than he knew.

On Saturday evening there was a dance at the Grange. Lucinda did not want to go; all those boys with cowboy hats and gum. So Judy drove Sam to the hall and Peter returned to collect him. A woman approached his parked car. "Peter Danto?"

He recognized her vaguely. "Yes?"

"I'm Janice Easterman. You knew me as Janice Saxe."

"Of course." He opened the car door, embarrassed.

"You haven't changed," she said. He stood. She offered him her hand.

"It's lovely to see you."

"I mean it. You look just the same."

"Our eyes get older," he pronounced, "along with the object perceived."

She smiled. Her breasts were fuller than he remembered, her ankles more substantial. She wore expensive, casual clothes: white pants with a drawstring, a silk shirt. Her sandals were gold, her skin dark. They made conversation about what he was doing here, about coincidence and how long it had been since they had last met.

"Are you married?" she asked.

"Yes. With two children."

"Your first wife?"

He nodded. "And you?"

"Congratulations," Janice said. "That's some kind of record, I think. I'm in the process myself."

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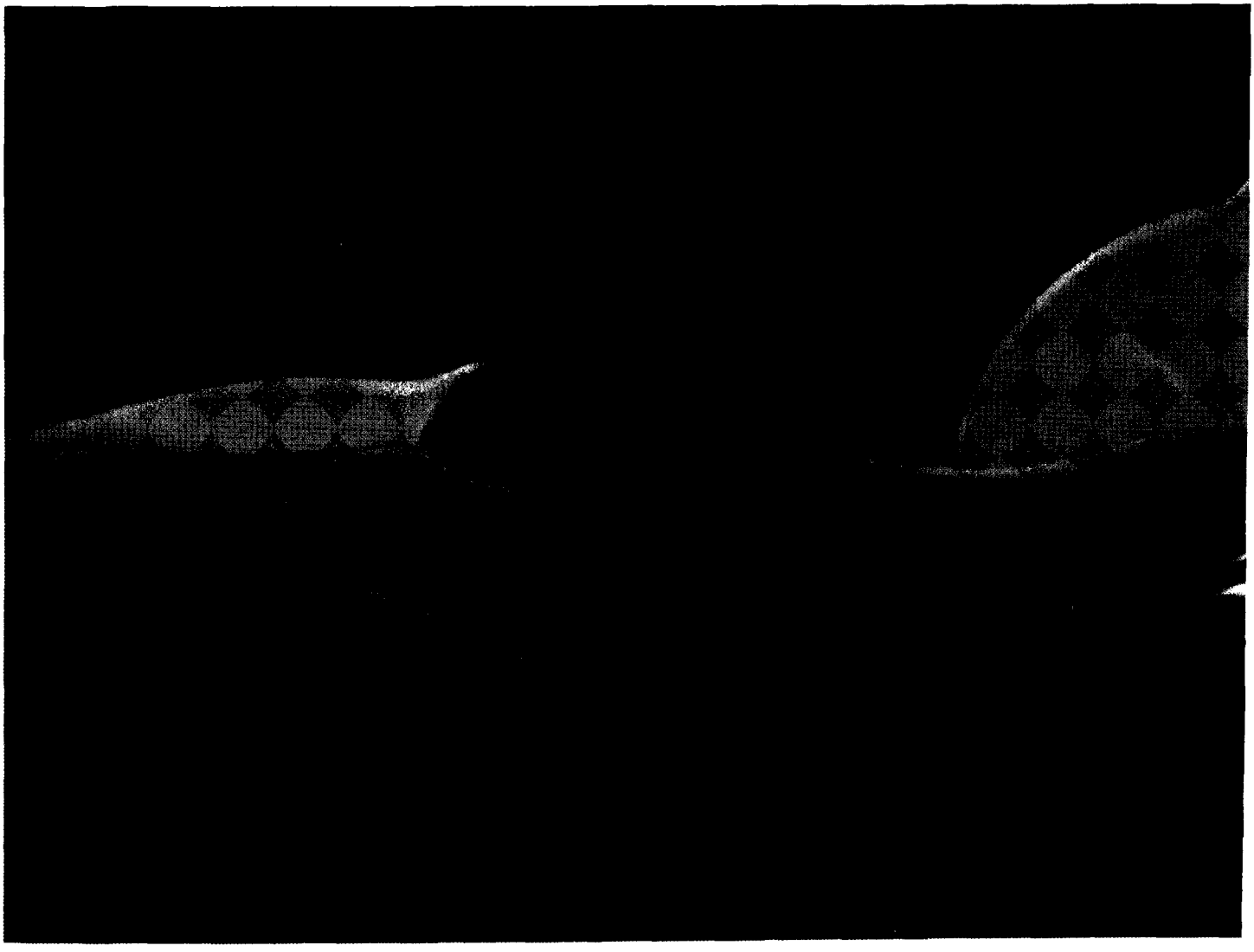

"Of marriage?"

"Divorce. We've been divorcing since we got married. Sometimes it seems like"—she laughed—"since *before* we got married. But this time there's lawyers involved."

The square dance was over. Children jostled out of the Grange, some with their arms still crossed or do-si-do-ing with their partners. Doors slammed. Mothers started their car radios and turned on their lights. "Are these two yours?" he asked.

"Lydia. Bill. Meet Peter Danto."

"I knew your mother long ago." He coughed, then cleared his throat. "It's nice to meet her children."

Sam appeared. He came to Peter shyly. They repeated introductions, and Lydia said, "We met inside. At the Virginia reel."

Janice was scanning the crowd; she gave him her profile. He watched. The memory of sex, he thought, can be as powerful as its expectation; their one previous encounter compelled him now again. He remembered it with clarity. They had gone to the movies together in August in Manhattan; it had been a wet night. She wore dungarees and a wool shirt, and the shapelessness of her apparel made her seem all the more shapely by contrast. He invited her back for a drink. When she accepted he knew she would accept him also; she put her arm around his waist as they waited for the light.

"I have to go now," Janice said. "It was a real pleasure seeing you."

"Good-bye." The children nodded, and she offered her right cheek to him. He kissed it lingeringly. She rarely had an orgasm the first time with a partner, she had said, and she would take her pleasure by helping him have his. This phrase remained with Peter eighteen years thereafter, and he wanted to recite it in the parking lot. Their children were at their elbows, however, and there was confusion at the exit ramp. "I remember you," he said.

"Do call." She smiled and was gone.

"Who was that?" Sam asked.

"An old friend," Peter said. "Did you enjoy yourself?"

"No."

"Not even the Virginia reel?"

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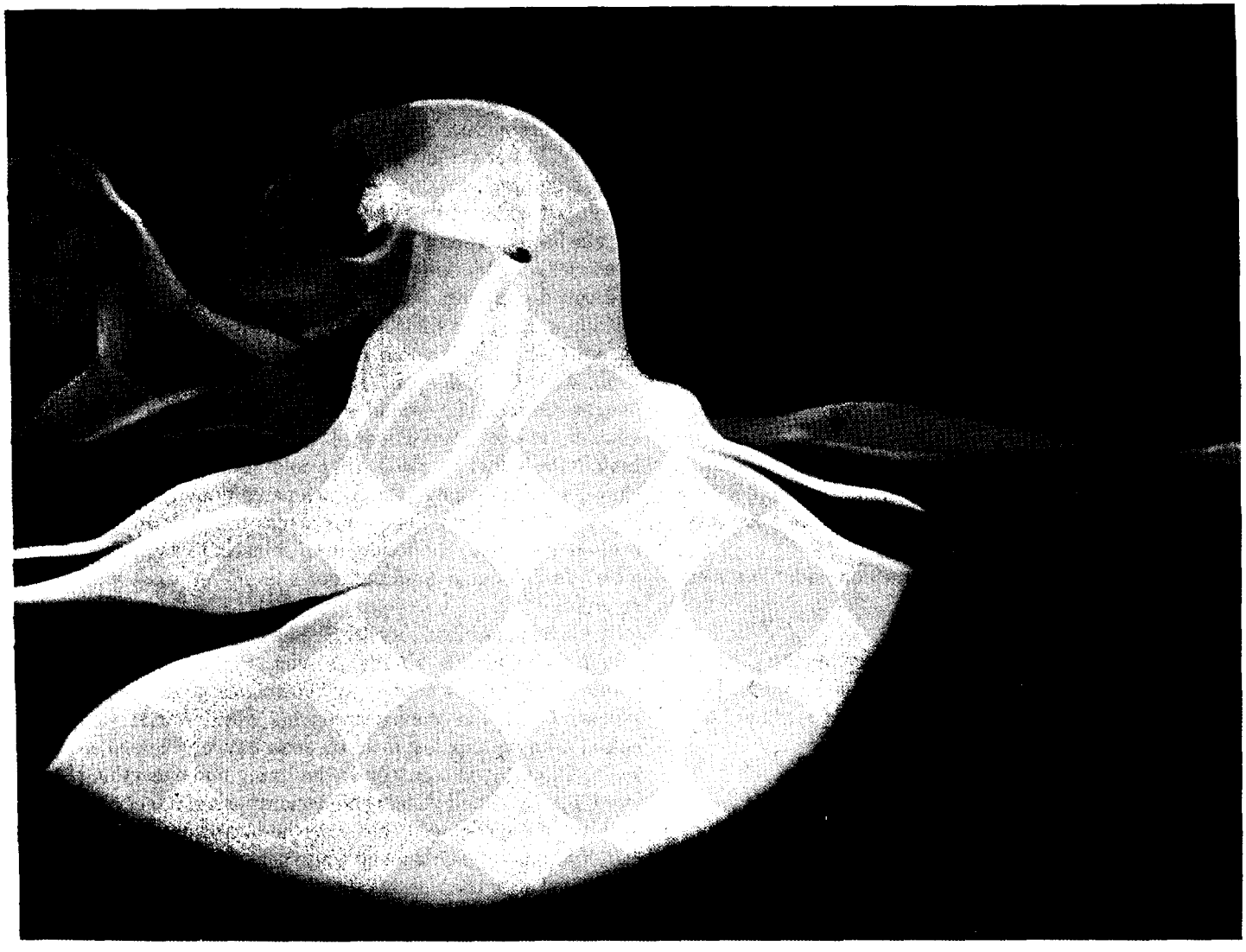

"I couldn't hear. I don't know the directions and everybody was talking."

"I'm sorry."

Magnanimous, Sam said, "It isn't your fault, Daddy."

"No," he said. "Let's go."

His daughter had grown beautiful. He had been prepared for this but not for its sudden coming, the transformation in one summer from pudgy adolescence to clean-limbed grace. It took him by surprise. In the grocery store or post office he watched men watching her—their sidelong glances or open admiration, the space they gave her where she walked or the banter at the check-out line. She wore shorts and a halter; her breasts were unbound. The length of her legs and the way that they tapered, the ridge of her pelvis and the hooded stare she offered when he asked her for more coffee—all of this, he told himself, had come about overnight. The telephone rang incessantly. "Ma Bell's best customer," he said. " 'Reach out and touch someone.' "

"They all go through it," Judy said.

"Miss Yellow Pages, 1981. The model for the princess phone."

"We could get her a separate number at home."

"Yes."

Lucinda took up water-skiing with the absolute attentiveness she had shown to Bill. She was out on the bay every morning. She learned to ski backward, and also with one slalom ski. She would crisscross her wake, leap and glide. He watched her from the porch. She would emerge from the water, dripping, shaking her head, her tank suit the color of flesh. Wind-surfers angled past their house in what he came to think of as a purposeful display. The sun unrolled a golden carpet in the waters where she swam. "Our Venus on the half-shell," Peter said.

She also went swimming at night. She said she loved the freedom of it, chilly black water and phosphorus and not knowing when you shut your eyes where you were in the water, not knowing if the thing that bit you was your buddy or a crab. "Be careful, Lucy," he said. She said she was being careful and that under the sign of the Crab it didn't matter anyway what bit you in the night. Celestial naviga-

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tion was the key. It meant learning how to tell the signs up in the zodiac, to know the difference between, say, Orion and Sagittarius. She bet he would never know the difference between Sagittarius and Orion if he was forced to steer by them, if Orion came right down and slapped him in the face.

"Orion's not likely to do that," he said.

"There's shooting stars."

"They don't exactly slap you in the face."

"They do me. Every night when shooting stars come this direction, I feel it," said his daughter. "Just like a signal."

"From light-years away?"

She nodded.

"Henny Penny thought so too," he said. "And Chicken Little."

"It's a matter of timing. They might have been right."

The speed of her retort alarmed him. " 'Live every day,' " he said, " 'as though that day will be your last. Someday you're bound to be right.' "

"That's from *Breaker Morant*," Lucinda said. "That's his line, isn't it?"

"You saw *Breaker Morant*?"

"Last Thursday, remember? At the Community Center."

She was escaping him, he knew, her memories and knowledge no longer his to control. "I worry anyhow," said Peter, "about this nighttime swimming."

"I'll be careful."

"Promise?"

"Yes." She was placatory, dismissive; her horoscope instructed her to go with the flow.

"Can I come too?"

Lucinda turned to him with Judy's tolerance. "It's a free ocean," she said.

HIS MOST RECENT PASSION WAS FOR A PHOTOGRAPH. He had been leafing through the autobiography of a movie star. The man was a great and advertised rake; he had squired leading ladies since the thirties and was—or so the flap copy claimed—"baring all." He told about his love affair with a figure skater and what she did with him one afternoon in the practice rink; he told about his walk-on roles in pornographic films. He had worn a fake beard and wig. One underground classic kept the camera focused "between navel and knee"; he said he had been widely recognized nevertheless. He told about the hiring system in Hollywood's heyday and the degree of business acumen in starlets who start on the couch. He had a chapter called "3-D: Drink, Dogs, and Drugs." He listed blondes, brunettes, and redheads in terms of their competency on horseback and in bed; he had been married six times.

One woman, however, commanded the author's respect. Peter saw her photograph. She had been reading a book. The other women in the photo section were wearing bikinis or low-cut gowns; they were smiling at the camera or brandishing pistols and whips. But Isabella Morris was attending to the text. Her brow was lightly furrowed, her posture upright yet relaxed; she sat in a white deck chair on what seemed to be a porch. Her dress was white; it buttoned to her throat. Peter recognized this woman as a woman he had known.

Her last name when he had met her was no longer Morris; she had been sixty, and frail. She was the aging mother of a briefly famous singer he had dated in New York. She had called him "Mr. Danto" with formality that felt unforced; he had been their houseguest in Katonah. She discussed Camus and Gaston Bachelard with him at breakfast, after he had spent the night disporting in her daughter's bed. He needed sleep. He crept back to his quarters at dawn, and at seven she sounded the gong. It rang in the hallway outside. He would wake and wash and shave, anxious to cover the night's fierce tumult, the way Betty had raked her fingernails across his back and had bruised his neck. He would drag himself to breakfast, where Isabella quartered oranges and offered toast with no crust.

The actor mourned Isabella. She had been the one pure lady in his impure life. He said as much. He said she had no public name and did not belong in a rogue's gallery. They met and courted in Manhattan during World War II, and he had been the happiest man, the most entirely blessed on leave. They stayed together at the Plaza, and everything was champagne and violets and declarations of fidelity for ever and ever; she had been—here he borrowed a phrase from a script—"a pearl among white peas." He had gone to Hollywood after the war. He spent the first three days just waiting for her call, for Isabella to join him and to share his life. She did not call. Her telephone conversation, when he called, was brief. He accepted an invitation to a yachting party, and there he met a pretty girl, and they started dating each other. One night at a restaurant she told him she was pregnant, and he woke up the next morning married, with a whiskey hangover and a telegram slipped under his door that read, "Darling I'll be out to join you next Wednesday Stop All business finished back east Stop I hate the phone Stop All my love forever Isabella."

The actor reproduced this telegram in his book. He berated himself for one whole paragraph, saying he had missed the opportunity of marriage to a splendid woman because he was impatient. He would never forgive himself; he counseled those who read this text or saw that photograph to pause a moment for love. Her face was lean. Her nose was patrician, her eyes downcast. She had dark lipstick on and what looked like a white wave in her short hair. She wore a strand of beads, a bracelet, and no ring. The photograph was dated 1943. She was soon to marry someone who later died in the Alps. As a young and wealthy widow she did not lack for suitors but chose to live alone. She raised her daughters to be intellectual and ath-

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letic, and polite. His girlfriend, Betty, had such enthusiastic, instantaneous orgasms that Peter felt irrelevant. She sang torch songs at The Dugout, then folk-rock, then tried scat-singing. She strained her vocal chords, however, and was told to rest. She told him that she did not miss the life of a nightclub singer, not in the slightest, and would rather be in France. He did not wish to go to France, and they separated without rancor.

Peter turned to this photograph often. He had known Isabella D'Augrement well, and had known her daughter intimately. He admired her good works, her charitable enterprise and unflagging determination to aid the deaf. She was fluent in sign language, and her servants all were deaf. They would clear the table and offer wine mutely, politely, nodding as Peter thanked them until he nodded back.

Yet her love affair with the actor had the force of revelation. It was common knowledge once, he read, and made the gossip columns. The actor's ghostwriter might have written for permission for the photograph and, perhaps, to ask if she had anything to say. She would have had nothing to say. She had told him, Peter, nothing. The image of this society lady as a supple beauty once, not dessicated and severe but nakedly embracing her lover in the Plaza—this image haunted him. It was a reproach. It argued lost youth, transience, the irretrievable past. He wanted to retrieve it and could not.

On the Porch

There used to be a way the sunlight caught
The cocoons of caterpillars in the pecans.
A boy's shadow would lengthen to a man's
Across the yard then, slowly. And if he thought
Some sleepy god had dreamed it all up—well,
There stood his grandfather, Lincoln-tall and solemn,
Tapping his pipe out on a white-flaked column,
Lazily, lazily, while the pipe-stars fell—
And yet with the air of someone at his job.
As for the quiet, the same train always broke it.
Then the great silver watch rose from its pocket
And he would check the hour—the dark fob
Holding the watch suspended like a moon.
It would be evening soon then, very soon.

—*Donald Justice*

ONE NIGHT HE DID DECIDE TO JOIN LUCINDA FOR A swim. There was a bright three-quarters moon; he looked down from the dune's height at two heads bobbing in the waves. He heard what he could swear was laughter; the heads appeared and then disappeared together. He shouted from the stairwell's crest, "Lucy, are you all right?" When he started down, however, he had to watch his footing; his ankle hindered him. The stairs were steep. For a moment he lost sight of her among the waves and rocks. By the time he reached the cliff's base she was standing at the waterline, wrapped in a white towel and holding a dry suit. "I could have sworn you were in trouble," Peter said.

"No, Daddy."

"Was there someone with you?"

"I was diving."

"I saw two heads. I heard you laughing."

"What makes you say that?"

"I was worried," Peter said.

"Don't be. I can swim."

They ascended. She had not answered his question, he knew, and he knew not to ask it again. Next morning, she said, "Sagittarius. Ted's a Sagittarius. That's why we get along."

"Who's Ted?" he asked her at breakfast.

"A friend."

"Does he live here?"

"Not all year round," she said. "He comes from Arizona too."

"You go to school in Arizona, remember? You come from Massachusetts."

"Anyway," she said. She helped herself to beach-plum jelly. Peter waited. He could hear her eat her toast.

"Anyway what?"

"Anyway nothing. You asked."

"Does he go swimming with you?"

"Yes."

"On the buddy system?"

She looked around the table. "Why such a federal case? You're making a federal case out of nothing, you know."

"I myself," he said, "was once a Sagittarius. I used to go swimming with girls."

"Big deal."

Peter finished his juice. "The beginning of wisdom," he said, "is knowing when to quit. I never was a Sagittarius. I never went swimming. I'd like to meet Ted."

"Fine," she said. "I'll invite him over."

"Tonight?"

"You're a Taurus," she said. "People don't go around changing their signs."

"I suppose not."

"The leopard his spots," Judy said. She had been frying eggs.

"Will you buy Bill?" he asked.

"I don't know." Lucinda turned to her mother. "I haven't thought about it much."

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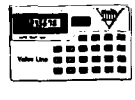

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"Then don't. Bill's doing fine without you, right?" Judy said. "You shouldn't buy a horse unless you want it worse than anything."

"*Passata la commedia,*" said Peter. "Now it's Ted."

INGER LEFT FOR A TOUR OF AMERICA AFTER THE LAST class. She would not return in the fall. They sat, legs touching, in the last row of the lecture hall; she took the seat by the door. *The Flies* had been a success. Their pictures appeared in the *Crimson* together. The portly, bespectacled French professor wiped his lectern before every session, then used a separate handkerchief for his hands and mouth. His specialty was Baudelaire and the "voyage motif." He sported a bow tie and unwrinkled suits. He wore pink shirts, always, and had a moustache.

She wanted Peter to accompany her; they could visit the Grand Canyon together, she said, and San Francisco. There were cars and relatives and rooms available everywhere; they could be each other's traveling companion. This proved impossible. He had a summer job, and his parents would not have approved. Her parents would certainly not have approved, and she was planning to visit friends of her parents in Chicago and Aspen.

She called him every night of the first week they were apart. She sent him letters from the Grand Canyon and Taos and Yellowstone Park. He loved her circumlocutions, he wrote, and her funny, twisted English, and he thought about the hand that wrote it and the wrist and elbow and arm and shoulder and everything connected to the shoulder.

By degrees, however, Inger's letters grew less frequent and her language less ardent. He turned his attention elsewhere, and the last time she called he was in bed with a girl from summer school. "This isn't a good time to talk," he said. When he called back later she told him she would fly to Sweden from New York, not Boston. He could meet her at the airport if he wished.

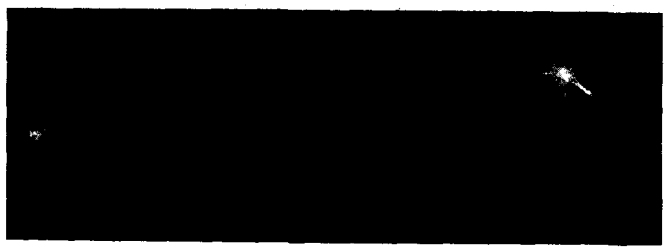
He did wish, and he tried to get to New York but could not find a car and anyway had been planning to attend the Red Sox game that night. He pictured himself at the airport with Inger, wrapping his arms around her and declaring with intensity that they were star-crossed lovers whose paths would cross again. The picture faded. He knew he could not persuade her of his vivid passion; it was unpersuasive.

In the years that followed, Peter heard of Inger often. She became rumor's subject once more. Rumor had it that she slept with Ingmar Bergman and bore his child but stayed married to an Italian industrialist nevertheless. The industrialist was sterile, and she therefore had his sanction to sleep with men of superior qualities and blood. She worked with refugees in Kenya and Thailand; she renounced her singing career but made pornographic films. She became a surgeon in Brazil.

Peter heard one story he did believe to be true. He encountered the director of *The Flies*. The director had prospered; he was returning from the festival at Cannes. "*Les Mouches,*" he said. "Can you believe it? All those years ago . . ." In Cannes, he said to Peter, he had met that Swede again; they were driven in the same car to the village of Valbonne. Ike and Tina Turner were playing in Valbonne, and celebrants from the festival drove up for the last show. He would have known her anywhere, he claimed; she had the same wild accent and green eyes.

The road from Cannes was narrow, and traffic slow. Someone in the party produced cocaine. When it was passed to Inger, she inhaled deeply and started to laugh. She said she had powdered her nose. She called Cannes the end of the world. The director described this with precision, and the image grew actual to Peter. Her long neck was arched, her body taut; she seemed convulsed with mirth. The limousine negotiated a hairpin turn; Inger fell to the floor. She spread her hands and crossed her legs and extended herself as if on a cross. He could not tell if this was a seizure or a pose. She lay there, twisted, grinning, till the car reached Club Valbonne—then gathered herself from the floor and walked off.

She had been crazy, the director said. She had absolutely refused to acknowledge him. She had been so spacy it was like the Hayden Planetarium right there in that car, in her eyes. Whatever she was into she was into absolutely, and he, Peter, should be grateful he'd got out.



HE PICKED HIS WAY ALONG THE BEACH. THEIRS WAS A rocky shore, with much litter and weed and many points where boulders made the going difficult. There were clay cliffs and freshwater streams. He walked for a full hour, heading east. The tide had washed away all traces of previous passage; he saw no footprints but his own. He did see Clorox bottles and beer cans, a torn beach sandal on the dunes, charred stumps and rocks in a circle.

Peter favored his ankle, testing footholds, anxious not to hurt himself so far from help. Sweating, he pulled off his shirt. He tied it to the branch of a fallen scrub oak tree, where he could collect it on the journey back. The cliffs behind him had huckleberry, gorse, and beach plum; there was poison ivy in abundance also. At his feet was a tangle of skate cases and mussel and horseshoe-crab shells. He came upon the object of his walk.

Two freshwater streams formed a cove. There were clay cliffs on either side, and a brickworks facing north. He had

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not been there in years. The place was familiar, however, its slope to the shoreline unaltered. Fog increased. Someone had tied a ladder to the scree-strewn dunes, and he clambered up it gratefully. A single brick chimney remained. There was a waterwheel and a network of pulleys and gears. The iron rail had rusted and the sluice had been clogged and silted in. Wooden archways gave on nothing. The crossbeams had sprung and the structure collapsed. Whole timbers lay at his feet. Initials had been carved in them, and hearts, and telephone numbers.

Yet the kiln he had come to was massive, its height intact. Small seabirds fled his approach. They fluttered past him noisily. He conceived of the brickworks at work. He saw men shaping clay, then firing it, then stacking and loading the brick on barges and floating them off with the favoring tide. Peter sat. He closed his eyes. He imagined horses would be grazing where men cleared off timber to burn. The waterwheel powered the bellows. It was hot. It was noontime, possibly, and time for lunch; a gong would sound three times. Men lay beneath the smokestacks or took their ease on the beach. Some chewed tobacco; some had cigarettes and pipes. They adjusted their caps. They talked about old Norton and his skinflint ways, the Mosler safe he had, the combination, the carriage, the daughter, too, who'd just as soon see you struck dead as smile, the big-mouthed bass at the head of the creek, the herring run that week. There would be a chopping contest at the fair next Thursday, and Norton's white Belgian by himself would pull more weight than Brady's team. The prize at ringtoss was to get to dunk the fireman; it had been a good year.

He had few friends. He had been a "ladies' man" and now was a "family man." He had acquaintances, of course, and men he could consult in need; he was sociable. But on the shore he felt himself abandoned, distinguished from the sea wrack only by his sentient alertness to the distinction as such. And for an instant even this faded, even that self-consciousness was washed into transparency. A buoy clanked out in the channel. In the nearing distance, he heard horns. The dream of fair women was with him, his daughter taking pride of place; she frolicked in the waves. The stream had not yet silted in nor production on the mainland proved the more efficient. The barges had not grounded or been sunk. He pictured three such chimneys while yet the brickworks thrived. Demand for brick was at its height; there were many who sat watching from the cove. Some sat slack-jawed, dozing, toying with their food or pipes; some boasted of their prowess or offered their opinion on the merits of a dog. Some gloried in their birth, some in their horse. Hope and fuel seemed inexhaustible, the future that is now the past still flaring, fiery bright.

She twirled and floated, oblivious. She and all her company swam by as though in thrall. The water was his arms. She was wearing a snorkel and therefore kept her face submerged; her hair fanned out around her like thick weed. He loved her unreservedly. Beauty decomposed. Had she been able or willing to listen, he would have told her so. She whistled in the spume.

PETER DANTO IS THIRTY-EIGHT YEARS OLD AND AN insurance broker in the Berkshires. He plans to build a windmill as an alternative energy source. Now that their daughter is away at school, and Sam so often busy, his wife considers buying into or establishing a business. She is sure-fingered, with a taste for children's clothes; she is gifted at and interested in puppetry, also. They do amateur theatricals and pageants for the holidays at home.

The Dantos are a three-car family. He drives a Saab and a Buick sedan and a yellow Datsun pickup truck; his ankle heals more slowly than he hoped. He is afflicted with nostalgia for imagined opportunity that had not been, when offered, opportune.

Judy does the crossword puzzle. "What's eight letters for traitor?" she asks. "Beginning with *q-u*."

"Quisling."

"That doesn't mean traitor."

"Close enough."

"I looked it up," she says. "It means collaborationist."

"Fellow-traveler," he says.

She fills in the letters with pencil, provisionally. When she is certain of a word, she writes the letters with pen.

"Imagine," Peter says, "getting your name known for that. Imagine Mr. Quisling's children, and his cousins and his aunts."

"What was that Frenchman called? The man who ran Vichy?"

"Pierre Laval," he says. "Or le Maréchal Pétain. There is a whole host of quislings. But they all have his name."

She lights a cigarette. Her hands, she says, indicate most clearly that she is no longer young. You cannot counterfeit youth with your hands. "What's twelve letters starting with *c*," Judy asks, "that means both beginning and end?"

"Commencement," Peter says.

The long reach before him looks calm. Cliffs and thick spruce entanglements rise on either side; the finger of water he follows seems an extension of flesh. It is slate-gray, however, then black when the moon goes down. He has taken on provisions at the head of the fjord, at a harbor he cannot pronounce. There are herring, flatbread, ice, and aquavit. □

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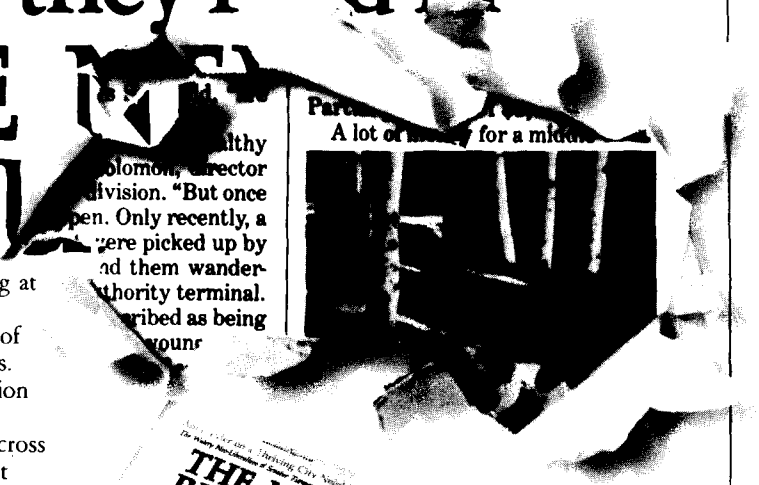
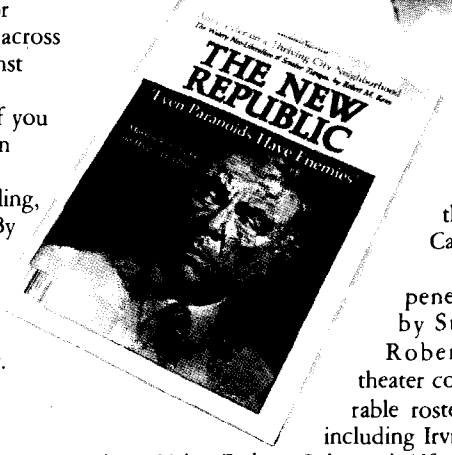
Some people get very angry over what they read in THE NEW REPUBLIC





Sometimes they're angry *at* us—we have a habit of jabbing at cherished political beliefs and philosophies. More often, they're angry *along with us*—sharing our outrage at some of the inanities that pass for reason in Washington these days.

But always, it's an anger of the noblest kind. The reaction of people who really care—who know that the search for truth can take some pretty aggravating twists and turns: across party lines, beyond conventional wisdoms, head-on against strong personal convictions.

Will THE NEW REPUBLIC make *you* angry? Only if you care about where our country is going in politics, foreign affairs, social justice, economics, the arts. Only if you're prepared to read some of the most provocative, compelling, cage-rattling journalism appearing anywhere today. By such lights as Morton Kondracke, John Kenneth Galbraith, Nicholas von Hoffman, Carl Bernstein, Joseph Alsop, Lester Thurow, Shirley Christian, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Garry Wills, Paul Fussell. And, of course, our own curmudgeonly "TRB," Richard Strout. For example:

In a series of timely articles, THE NEW REPUBLIC explored the idea behind supply-side economics: that producers should be encouraged, through tax incentives, to produce. We agreed with the *idea*, but not the practice under *Reagan*. Are rich people, we asked, the true producers of wealth? Or just the most conspicuous consumers of it?

While everyone else was praising Japan's "miracle economy" to the skies, Daniel Yergin in THE NEW REPUBLIC predicted that the Japanese bullet train may be headed off the tracks. And for a reason you probably never thought of.

In several articles, we pointed out how giant corporations seem to be running American foreign policy. We didn't cite merely the obvious cases, like Chile. We showed how U.S. oil companies were propping up the Marxist regime in Angola and how banks were siding with the Russians against Solidarity in Poland. And a special investigative report in THE NEW REPUBLIC (reprinted later by newspapers around the country) revealed how Saudi Arabia secretly pressured corporations into lobbying to pass the AWACS bill.

While even many conservative publications urged a wait-and-see attitude shortly after martial law was imposed in Poland, THE NEW REPUBLIC took a tough line from the start.

And if you also tend to get emotional about things cultural, there's still more in store for you. Our outspoken TV critic, Mark Crispin Miller . . . who didn't hesitate to blast the phoniness of a sentimental special on race relations, or shy from praising a performer he thinks is a genius: Johnny Carson.

You'll also enjoy penetrating film reviews by Stanley Kauffmann. Robert Brustein's knowing theater coverage. And an incomparable roster of book reviewers, including Irving Howe, R.W.B. Lewis, Anne Tyler, Robert Coles and Alfred Kazin.

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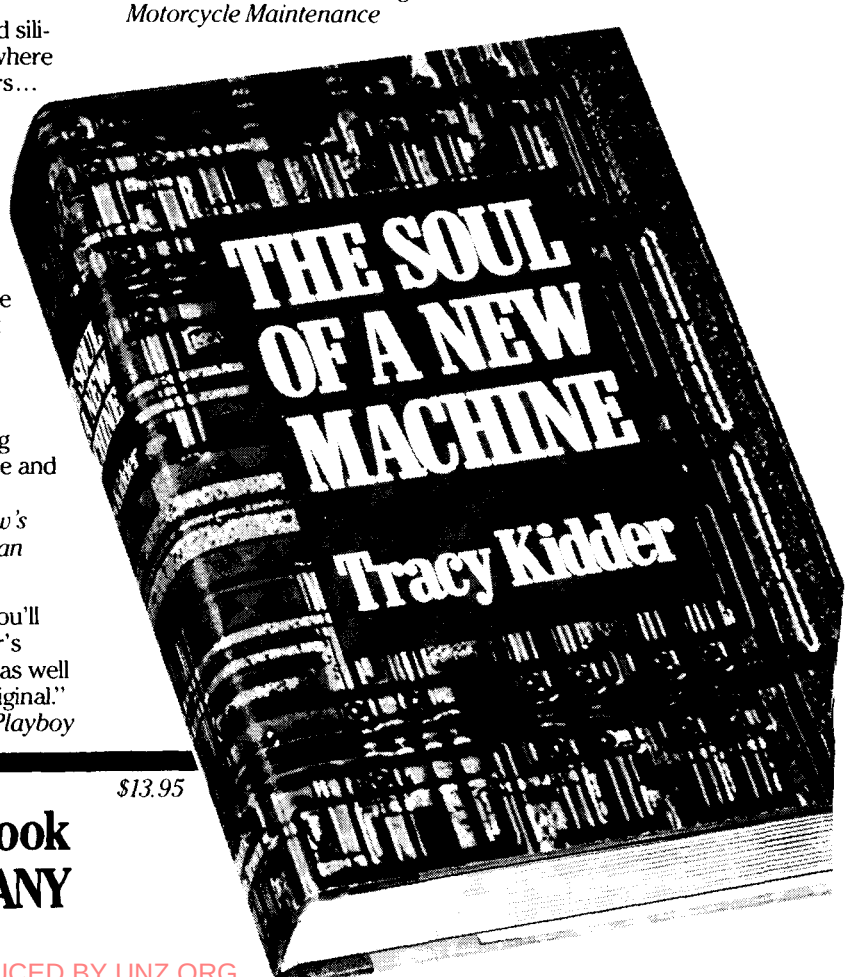

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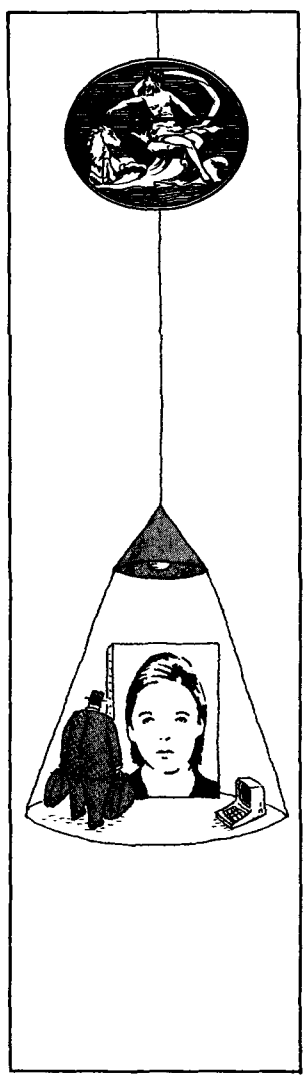
COME TO MY SPA

BY ROBERT M. STROZIER



ILLUSTRATIONS BY MARK KSENIAK

IF YOU WANT to become irresistible, visit my fabled spa, where we will drastically improve your endowments the safe, natural, and effective way. You will learn the million-dollar secrets of the superthin. Here is Day One.

We moisture-whip your body. You are assigned a buzz word. One of our specialists prepares a mock-up of you, for ready reference later. Breakfast: you sniff a cachet containing flavor crystals. Positive reinforcement class: you get into your own gel-set; center yourself at the Kath, which is the Japanese place two inches below the navel; reside in the upper-lip area of your breath; calm flyaway ends.

You do psycho-torso-matics exercises. If you want it to, PTM will automatically dislodge unsightly bulges. They will then creep around, greedy to find more seemly spots, spreading out evenly as they go. Anything that's left over, after the inches have changed places, such as fat-gone-wrong, frown lines, and the flab greasies, will melt off you and resolve itself into a dew. You will have a divine underbelly.

Documentary: "Blow-Drying Eddie's Hair." Lunch: Bean au Vert. Nap: you sleep on a slant board with your feet pointing toward the stars. Class: How To Have Pencil-Thin Legs. We get rid of the wax buildup that has accumulated on you from previous wax treatments. Class on popularity. Choice of: How To Drip Charm, How To Laugh In Peals, How To Be Ultra-Self-Brite, How To Be Coy Bacon, How To Laugh Like Buck Owens. You take a rock steam bath, a mineral whirlpool bath, a medicinal Roman bath, a colonic bath, a solaria Swiss shower, and a salt-glow sitz bath. You will re-experience the Protestant Soul Bath. We pat you dry with Q-tips.

Slide show, tracing the history of my spa. It has been visited by 68 percent of the Beautiful People, including: Baroness Pauline de Rothschild, Princess Ira Von Furstenberg, Ari, Mstislav Rostropovich, Robert Morse, Frecky Stevens, Kibuji Chief Nijiri, Lily of France, Carol and Mary from Hawaii, André Malraux, Baby Jane Holzer, Rainer Maria Rilke, Honey Bee, Thor Heyerdahl, David Reuben, "Vital" Sassoon, Lilias, The Flab-Gard Beat Queen, Dr. Feelgood, Otto "Rollo" Rank, Ruth Roman, James Pike, The Croque Monsieur, Jack La Lanne, Elaine Po Powers, Evelyn Wood, Charles of the Ritz, Billy of Burbank, Jenny One-Note, and Henry Steele Commager.

You rake in rugs with your toes. The foot is a flawed masterpiece and an example of nature's genius. Snack: a kelp-kiss. Prunella, a former Playboy bunny, demonstrates how to tailgate your man. Locution lesson. You cannot be lovable if you talk through your nose in a thin, reedy, mosquito-like voice. You will be whiny, lifeless, and negative. So do something about it, for God's sake. One of our pastoral counselors gives you a tip: if you're at a party, place a leg on furniture and s-t-r-e-t-c-h.

Before the evening's festivities, you visit the Pill Mill. We dispense a clinically proven invention I invented called makeup pills. They're like tanning tablets. A huge selection of different looks that you would want to be having is available. Just swallow the pill of your choice, and, within a brief elapsed time, the selected combo of hair color, lipstick, mascara, toners, conditioners, blushers, vitalizers, penetrators, emulsifiers, translucers, incandescers, primers, quenchers, cherishers, glossers, and gleamers will glide *into* lips, arms, legs, etc.

Say you'd like to have some amber-frost lids, Florentine-brick lips, woody-heather cheeks, naughty-nutmeg-colored hair, and a yummy pink-carrot punktrunk glo all over with maybe just a splash of disco-dust on the cleavage thrown in—well, then all you have to do is take as directed the pill that has those elements in it. You will feel more beautiful, too, as this ocean of emotion-lotion

Robert Strozier's observations have frequently appeared in The Atlantic.

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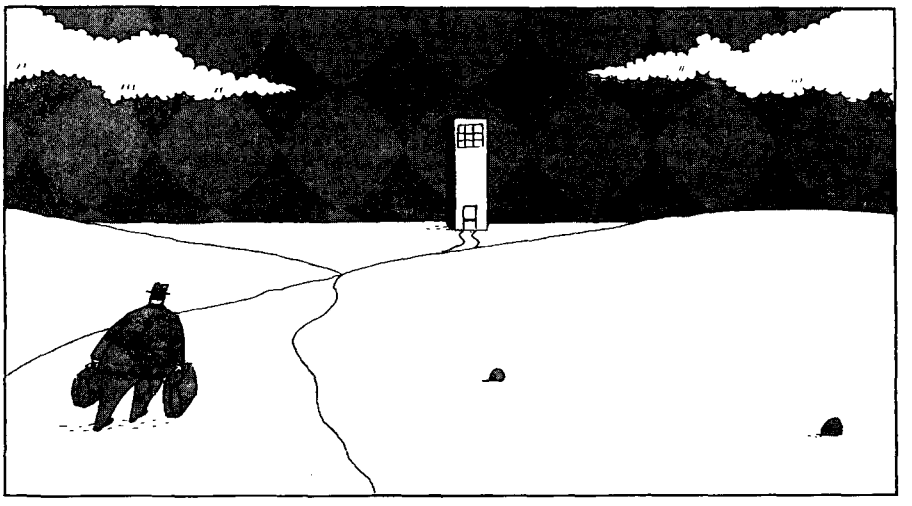

pulses through you. We pitch our pill to the mature woman. The worst thing that could happen to you is to have naked eyes.

To fully experience life, you do a buttocks "walk" through wet mud and smoldering leaves. Dinner: a water Poptart. Lecture: The Job Interview, The Problem That Won't Go Away. Discussion: Do The Rich Get Richer And The Fat Get Fatter? You split up into small groups for classes on sexual fulfillment. Choice of: How To Turn On Your Therapist, How To Jockey For The Right Sex Positions, How To Stagger Your Love Crops And Go For The Moon, How To Train A Seal To Be Your Double-Duty Love Slave, How To Get Turned On By Scratching Your Head In Bewilderment, How To Pick Up Men—And Keep Them, How To Pick Up Stable Boys, How To Pick Up Location Grips, How To Pick Up Wayne Newton, How To Pick Up Ballpark Humorous Animals, How To Pick Up Little Brown Mavericks Who Are Winking Their Eyes, How To Pick Up Lantern-Jawed, Vinegar-Faced, Foam-Flecked, Toilet-Tongued, Rebellious French Prelates.

A Polish proverb says that a beautiful woman, to look right, must swim three times—in water, butter, and wine. So, before going to bed, you do that. Lights out. In bed, do these de-tensionizers: Helium Belly-yawn, Horse Laugh, Glottis Gallop, Idiot Fingers, Caveman Thump, Helmet of Hum, Buzzing Palms, Elbow Propeller, Double-Decker Bus, Licker-Snickers, and Dodo-Bird.

Someone comes by selling things, including my latest books: *What It Is—And How To Get It, The Iron Man Of The Pre-Fab Self: My Story,* and *Me And The Night And The Music.* Before slipping off, do an herbal wrap. Wrap yourself in an unbleached linen sheet that has been steeped in a fragrant blend of medicinal herbs. Simmer in it. Turn frequently. Add all other ingredients. Arrange yourself on a bed of fresh watercress. Garnish with sliced cherry tomatoes and uncooked haricots. Nighty-night. □

TOYS

LIVING WITH A COMPUTER

BY JAMES FALLOWS

I'D SELL MY COMPUTER before I'd sell my children. But the kids better watch their step. When have the children helped me meet a deadline? When has the computer dragged in a dead cat it found in the back yard?

The Processor Technology SOL-20 came into my life when Darlene went out. It was a bleak, frigid day in January of 1979, and I was finishing a long article for this magazine. The final draft ran for 100 pages, double-spaced. Interminable as it may have seemed to those who read it, it seemed far longer to me, for through the various stages of composition I had typed the whole thing nine or ten times. My system of writing was to type my way through successive drafts until their ungainliness quotient declined. This consumed much paper and time. In the case of that article, it consumed so much time that, as the deadline day drew near, I knew I had no chance of retyping a legible copy to send to the home office.

I turned hopefully to the services sector of our economy. I picked a temporary-secretary agency out of the phone book and was greeted the next morning by a gum-chewing young woman named Darlene. I escorted her to my basement office and explained the challenge. The manuscript had to leave my house by 6:30 the following evening. No sweat, I thought, now that a professional is on hand.

But five hours after Darlene's arrival, I glanced at the product of her efforts. Stacked in a neat pile next to the typewriter were eight completed pages. This worked out to a typing rate of about six and a half words per minute. In fairness to Darlene, she had come to a near-total halt on first encountering the word "Brzezinski" and never fully regained her stride. Still, at this pace Darlene and I would both be dead—first I'd kill her, then I'd kill myself—before she came close to finishing the piece. Hustling her out the door at the end of the day, with $49 in wages in her pocket and eleven pages of finished manuscript left behind, I trudged downstairs to face the typewriter myself. Twenty-four hours later, I handed the bulky parcel to the Federal Express man and said, "Never again."

Over the next few weeks, my thoughts often drifted to the advertisements I had seen in airline magazines, in which trim and cheerful secretaries effortlessly produced documents by typing in front of computer screens. Were these devices real? I checked with a salesman for a company called Lanier and discovered that while their word-processing system, called "No Problem," was quite real, it cost some $15,000. If I had drawn a pie chart representing my annual income, No Problem would have been a very large piece of pie. I called Wang, Digital Equipment, and some of the other big-name manufacturers and got roughly the same news. If I called the same manufacturers today, I'd hear much more encouraging news, but my options were to start writing shorter articles, go into hock, or take my chances again with Darlene.

The way out of my dilemma came from an unexpected quarter. My father-in-law often dealt with inventors who put to-

James Fallows is Washington editor of The Atlantic *and the author of* National Defense.

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gether computer systems to monitor various industrial processes, and he thought that one of them might have the answer. On his advice, I followed a trail of leads and suggestions that eventually led me to a converted church in the farmlands of central Ohio. There, Bill Cavage, Marv Monroe, and Bill Jones, three young engineers doing business as the Optek Corporation, tinkered with disk drives, photo-sensors, and other devices in hopes of making the big sale. Optek's specialty is making machines like the one they produce for drug companies, which counts pills as they pass by at a rate of 24,000 per minute and kicks out any bottles that receive the wrong number of pills. For men who can do all this, I thought, turning a small computer into a word-processing system should be a cinch.

For a while, I was a little worried about what they would come up with, especially after my father-in-law called to ask how important it was that I be able to use both upper- and lower-case letters. But finally, for a total of about $4,000, Optek gave me the machinery I have used happily to this day.

The ingredients were the basic four of any word-processing system. First was the computer itself, the Processor Technology SOL-20. Its detailed specifications—its 48K of random access memory, its Intel 8080 microprocessing chip—are now of antiquarian interest, since Processor Technology went out of business several months after I bought my computer.

The second element in my system was the monitor, a twelve-inch TV screen. Some monitors are like black-and-white TVs; mine—which, oddly enough, was produced by the same company, Ball Corporation, that makes home-canning supplies—displays light-green letters against a background of dark green and is supposed to be easier on the eyes. Third was the external storage device—the equipment that saves the documents you've written when the computer is turned off. The equipment I chose, two small tape recorders, was such a complete disaster that I must discuss it separately later on. Fourth was the printer, a ponderous machine, built like a battleship, which had been an IBM Selectric typewriter before it was converted to accept printing instructions from a computer.

These four machines, and the yards and yards of multi-strand cable that con-

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Werner Erhard

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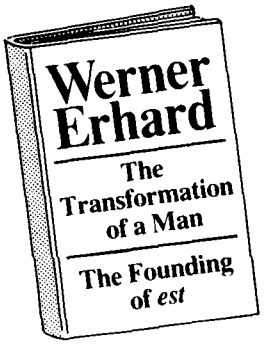

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nected them, were the hardware of my system. The software consisted of a program called The Electric Pencil, with a manual explaining the mysteries of "block move," "home cursor," and "global search and replace."

I skip past the day during which I thought the computer didn't work at all (missing fuse) and the week or two it took me to understand all the moves The Electric Pencil could make. From that point on, I knew there was a heaven.

WHAT WAS SO exciting? Merely the elimination of all drudgery, except for the fundamental drudgery of figuring out what to say, from the business of writing. The process works this way.

When I sit down to write a letter or start the first draft of an article, I simply type on the keyboard and the words appear on the screen. For six months, I found it awkward to compose first drafts on the computer. Now I can hardly do it any other way. It is faster to type this way than with a normal typewriter, because you don't need to stop at the end of the line for a carriage return (the computer automatically "wraps" the words onto the next line when you reach the right-hand margin), and you never come to the end of the page, because the material on the screen keeps sliding up to make room for each new line. It is also more satisfying to the soul, because each maimed and misconceived passage can be made to vanish instantly, by the word or by the paragraph, leaving a pristine green field on which to make the next attempt.

My computer has a 48K memory. Since each K represents 1,024 bytes of information—each byte representing one character or digit—the machine can manipulate more than 49,000 items of information at a time. In practice, after allowing for the space that The Electric Pencil's programming instructions occupy in the computer's memory, the machine can handle documents 6,500 to 7,500 words long, or a little longer than this article. I break anything longer into chunks or chapters and work with them one at a time.

When I've finished with such a chunk, I press another series of buttons and store what I have written on my disk drive. This is a cigar-box-shaped unit that sits next to my computer, connected through a shocking-pink ribbon cable containing thirty-four separate strands. Inside the drive is the floppy disk, which is essentially magnetic recording tape pressed into the shape of a small record and then enclosed in a square cardboard envelope, 5¼ inches on each side. The system transfers data from the computer to the disk, or vice versa, at about 1,000 words per second, so it is no nuisance to pause after each fifteen or twenty minutes of writing to store what I've just done. Each of the disks in my system can hold about 100K of information, or more than twice as much as a full load from the computer memory. If one disk is full, I pull it out and snap another in.

When I finish what I'm working on, I switch on my printer. If I'm sending a letter, I load the stationery into the printer and push the print button, and then fish each piece of paper out of the printer when it is done. There are machines that automatically feed single sheets of paper into the printer, but that takes us back to big slices of the income pie. If I am printing a draft of an article, I can hook up my tractor feed, push the print button, and go out for a beer. The tractor pulls an endless sheet of paper through the printer—and the perforated paper can be separated into pages when the printing is done, so it looks like a normal manuscript.

The system prints about thirty characters per second, which means it takes less than a minute per double-spaced page. When it has completed its work, I take the manuscript and start working it over with a pencil, just as I did in days of old. The difference is that after I've made my changes, I have only to type in the changes I have made and start the printer up again—rather than retype the whole mess.

None of this may sound impressive to those who have fleets of secretaries at their disposal, or to writers who can say precisely what they mean the first time through. Isaac Asimov recently complained in *Popular Computing* that his word-processor didn't save him much time on revisions, since he composes at ninety words per minute and "95 per cent of what I write in the first draft stays in the second [and final] draft." My first-draft survival ratio is closer to one percent, so for me the age of painless revisions is a marvel.

You won't catch me saying that my machine has made me a better writer, but I don't think it has made me any worse. Since I now spend less time and energy retyping, I have more left over for editing and rewriting. There is even an editing step possible only with the machines. When I think I'm finished with an article, I set the print speed to Slow. This runs the printer at about 100 words per minute, or roughly the pace of reading aloud. I stuff my ears with earplugs and then lean over the platen as the printing begins. Watching the article printed at this speed is like hearing it read; infelicities are more difficult to ignore than when you are scooting your eye over words on a page.

I have not yet stooped to the politician's trick of programming the computer to write standard letters of reply. I have, however, discovered a few other sneaky word-processing feats. Suppose you are writing an article in which an unusual word appears frequently—let us choose "Brzezinski" once again. When writing the draft, you simply type a certain character, say * or +, each time Brzezinski should appear, and then when you're ready to print you signal the computer to insert "Brzezinski" in place of the character.

In addition to The Electric Pencil, I bought the software for a computer-programming language known as BASIC. The B in BASIC stands for Beginners (the full name is Beginners All-purpose Symbolic Instruction Code), but I have not yet found a mathematical project for which BASIC is inadequate. When I want to know how many prime numbers there are between one million and two million, or how quickly my mortgage payments would bankrupt me if interest rates rose to 35 percent—that is, when I don't want to do my work—I can kill ten minutes writing programs to tell me the answer. Getting down to business, I use the computer to do my income tax. My economic life is a mess of $2.75 parking-lot tickets and $13.89 lunch receipts, which used to pile up like fall leaves until I spent a week burrowing through them at income-tax time. Now all I do is sit down at the machine for five minutes every few nights and type in all transactions of interest to the tax man—so much in from my employers, so much out to the credit-card company. At the end of the year, I load the income-tax program into the computer, push the button marked "Run," and watch as my tax return is prepared. Since it took me only about six months to learn BASIC (and the tax laws) well enough to write the program, I figure this approach will save me time by 1993.

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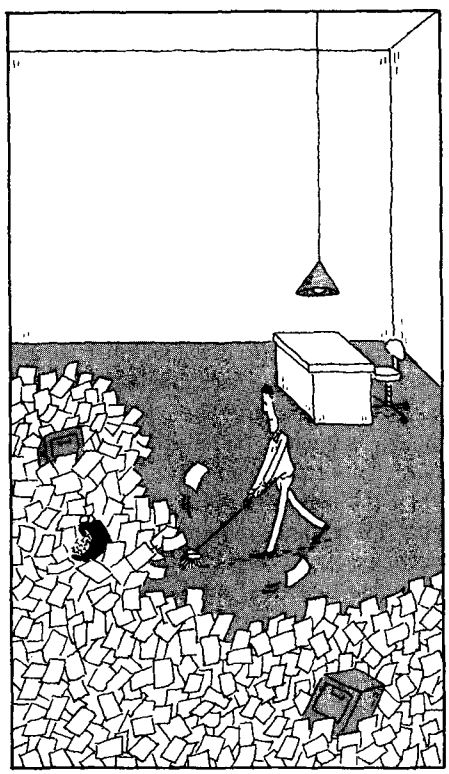
TO BE SURE, a computer does bring problems into the home. For one, it creates yet another reason to feel vulnerable to the workings of fate.

Shortly after I got my machine, I was typing away in the basement as a summer thunderstorm moved into town. Knowing what I now know, these days I immediately shut off the machine and unplug it from the wall whenever thunder is reported any nearer than West Virginia. But I was not so wise then. I had turned on the printer and gone upstairs when a bolt of lightning struck the house. There was a huge boom, and a white flash outside windows on all sides of our house. Several million volts coursed through our wiring and blew out nearly every electrical appliance that was plugged in. The blast burned out a clothes iron, and if it had that effect on a big hunk of steel, you can imagine what went on in the computer's delicate interior. For a month I was machine-less, thrown back on my Smith-Corona, while computer repairmen replaced one silicon chip after another that had melted in its casing.

Computers cause another, more insidious problem, by forever distorting your sense of time. When I first saw the system in the back room at Optek, I was so dazzled by the instantaneous deletion of sentences and movement of paragraphs that I thought I could never want anything more. When the scientists at Optek warned me about certain bottlenecks, I had to stifle my laughter. In particular, they warned me that I might grow impatient with tape recorders as a way to store data. You have to understand, they told me, it can take five or ten minutes to load a long draft into the computer from tapes, whereas a disk drive (which would add a thousand dollars to the cost) could do the job in seconds. Typical vulgarians of the machine age, I told myself. How could they imagine that I would object to five or ten minutes, when I had been spared Darlene?

Three weeks later, I was griping constantly about the tapes and scanning the pages of *Byte* magazine, looking for a good deal on a disk drive. Ten minutes was intolerable when everything else happened in a flash. Worse, the tapes had the fatal defect of unreliability; even after waiting ten minutes, you were never quite sure that the information was safely stored. The only way to tell was to try to feed the data back from the tapes into the computer, which took another ten minutes and often led to the infuriating message "Tape Error." After one article disappeared forever behind a thicket of Tape Errors, I scraped up $800 for a cut-rate disk drive. Now my discontent is awakened only when I read stories about the new disks—larger ones that hold twice as much data as mine, and double-density models that hold twice as much as that.

I CAN HARDLY BRING myself to mention the true disadvantage of computers, which is that I have become hopelessly addicted to them. To the outside world, I present myself as a man with a



business need for a word-processing machine. Sure, I have a computer: I'd have a drill press if I were in the machine-tool business. This is the argument I make frequently to my wife. The truth, which she has no doubt guessed, is that *I love to see them work.*

I nearly destroyed my health, to say nothing of my marriage, during the months when I switched off The Electric Pencil at ten or eleven at night—and then switched on BASIC and spent a few hours refining a tax-and-accounting system. At first my goal was merely to design a program that would work, that wouldn't print "Syntax Error in Line 2140" when I tried to run it. Then I started playing around, seeing if I could work out a scheme for financial projections that would take care of estimated tax payments to the IRS. Would it have been easier to mail in the $150 each quarter and then square accounts with the IRS at the end of the year? Of course—but that was not the point. Eventually, I aspired even to *elegant* programming, designing the matrices and the nested loops in a way that added the beauty of simplicity to the scheme.

When I contemplate my future with computers, my emotions are mixed. Because time and progress have passed my machine by, I simply can't buy any new programs for the SOL. They don't exist. This is a source of unending frustration: how I'd love to use a new word-processing program, one that could insert footnotes at the bottom of the proper page or automatically prepare an index for a book. How I'd love to get VisiCalc or SuperCalc or one of the other accounting systems that can turn a home computer into a miniature version of the National Bureau of Economic Research. How deprived I feel as I read the fliers for CompuServ and The Source, the over-the-phone services that enable you to make airline reservations, call up old newspaper articles, and send computer mail, all from the privacy of your home. How I wish my employers would install computers in their headquarters, so I could submit articles over the telephone, one computer to another, instead of fighting the crowds at the Express Mail window.

Yet even as I think these thoughts, I fear their fulfillment. My computer already competes with wife and children for my affection: can our family stand anything more? The question will remain moot until the price of replacement computers comes down a little more—or until I succeed in convincing my wife that she, too, needs a computer, so I can give her mine and rush out to buy a new one for myself (for business purposes, of course).

BY NOW YOU probably want to be like me. Your first step is to avoid several of the major mistakes. Since I made them, I know what they are.

1. *Guessing wrong.* The chances are that you have already avoided this, my most costly mistake. The microcomputer industry these days is like the auto business in 1910, with a thousand little hustlers trying to claim a piece of the action. The next time you feel depressed about the vigor of the American econo-

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my, pick up a copy of *Byte*—or *Personal Computing*, or *Popular Computing*, or *Interface Age*, or *InfoWorld*—and look at the columns upon columns of ads from small-time companies with new products to sell.

Still, some parts of the industry have calmed down, at least compared with the chaos of three or four years ago. To extend the comparison with the auto industry, it was as if different models ran on slightly different kinds of fuel, and no one could be sure which would be the standard when the struggle for survival sorted itself out. When I bought my computer, many programs were designed for one model of computer only, since the protocols and disk-operating systems varied from one brand to another.

If I had guessed right, my brand, the Processor Technology SOL, would have caught on, and today I'd have the equivalent of a Mercedes-Benz instead of a Hupmobile. I'd be able to buy new programs at the computer store, and I'd be able to plug in to all the over-the-phone services. But I guessed wrong, and I'm left with a specimen of an extinct breed. When I need new programs, I try to write them myself, and when I have a breakdown, I call the neighborhood craftsman, Leland Mull, who lovingly tends the dwindling local population of SOL-20s.

You won't have this problem, because the war of standardization for personal computers is just about over. The crucial, bitterly contested territory was the disk-operating system, the coded instructions that enable computers to interface (the word cannot be escaped in this business) with the disk drives. My system uses the North Star Disk Operating System, abbreviated DOS and pronounced *doss*, but North Star didn't win. The winner was a DOS called CP/M (for Control Program for Microcomputers), which has become the industry standard and is earning millions for a formerly small company known as Digital Research. Almost any kind of computer you buy these days will be compatible with CP/M, and almost any kind of software will come in CP/M versions. To put it another way, you should be wary of any machine or any program that won't run CP/M.

There are a few exceptions to this rule. For instance, the Tandy Corporation sells various models of its TRS-80 computers at Radio Shack stores. These can be configured to accept CP/M, but they're designed for the company's own operating system, known as TRSDOS, pronounced *trissdoss*. Radio Shack offers so many TRSDOS programs and such an extensive repair-and-support network that you are hardly leaving the mainstream by buying one of their machines.

Another important exception is IBM, which has just burst onto the home market with its Personal Computer. For those who are deep into the world of gigantic mainframe computers—engineers, for example, who want a home computer so that they can draw over the phone from the main data banks at the office—it offers obvious advantages, since it is compatible with other IBM products. But it is also part of another war for DOS dominance. The Personal Computer's microprocessor—the chip that operates the computer's logic—is a "16-bit" microprocessor, as opposed to the "8-bit" chips of most other small computers. (A bit is a basic yes-or-no, 0-or-1 unit of computer information. The IBM chip can handle twice as many bits at a time.) The difference between 16- and 8-bit chips is of no practical significance at the moment for most home-computer systems, although the 16-bit chips should support faster-operating and more powerful computer programs, when the software industry catches up with this advance in hardware. The new machines will require different disk-operating systems, and may therefore inspire another DOS war. Digital Research has produced a version called CP/M-86, which will work on the Personal Computer and other 16-bit systems, such as the Victor 9000, but many people suspect that IBM will wage a counter-offensive with a DOS of its own.

2. *Scrimping on storage.* Computers are now reaching the "commodity" stage. With a few glaring exceptions, to be mentioned in a moment, they're all more or less the same. Not so the storage devices—the disks or tapes on which you store information when the machine is turned off. Tapes are obviously a terrible idea, but the wrong kind of disk can be almost as bad.

The practical limit on what a computer can do is not the memory built into the machine itself, although any serious computer should have at least 48 and preferably 64K of random access memory, but rather how much information it can quickly draw from its disks. Here again I speak from the perspective of the sadder-but-wiser man. In moving up from tapes to a disk drive, I took the bargain route. I bought one rather than two, used small disks (5¼" diameter) rather than large (8"), and chose single- rather than double-density storage. I saved a couple of hundred dollars but bought myself a source of frustration, since each disk fills up too quickly and I have to keep rotating different disks in and out of the drive. (Again, this may not sound like much to you, but live with it for a year or two and you'll see what I mean.) I think you're cheating yourself if you get anything less than two double-density 5¼" drives, which together should be able to store 400K or more of data. The exact capacity varies quite a lot, depending on the configuration a manufacturer chooses. A two-drive system of 5¼" disks for the Apple III, for instance, can store as little as 280K, while Heath-Zenith and Victor each offer two-drive 5¼" systems that hold more than 1,000K, or one megabyte. In some cases, you may do better to get two 8" drives, depending on the specific prices and configurations different manufacturers offer.

The top of the line among storage systems is the hard disk, most often available in the form called the Winchester. (This is not a brand but a nickname, applied by wits in the computer world because the model number on one of the earliest drives was 3030, reminiscent of a rifle.) The other disks, known as floppies, get pulled in and out of their drives like tape cassettes, but a Winchester is permanently sealed in its case. You don't need to remove the hard disks because each one stores a prodigious amount of data, from two or three on up to several dozen megabytes. With even a small Winchester, you can store some 2,000 pages of data at once—enough, for example, to contain all the notes for a book, along with drafts of all chapters, or a record of all your correspondence over a period of years. Winchesters are expensive; cheap models go for about $2,000, and some of them cost at least twice that much. But you shouldn't buy one right now anyway. They're just entering the period of soaring volume and falling prices and will be cheaper in a year.

3. *Scrimping on the printer.* The same misguided frugality that directed me toward tape recorders also tempted me to think that my converted Selectric printer was a great deal. True, I could have made an even worse mistake. I could

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have bought a dot matrix printer, which is fast and cheap but which leaves you with a manuscript resembling a grocery receipt. If eyes other than your own are going to see the things you print, you're foolish to get anything except a letter-quality printer. This means either a converted Selectric, like my first printer, or one of the systems known as daisy wheels or thimbles. These have small wheels or drums that spin across the page and print at a phenomenal rate. They cost more than the Selectric to begin with, but they're a bargain in the long run. The real cost of the Selectric is the headaches of repair and breakdown. In operation, it is a blur of rods and connectors, one of which is always about to go awry. But daisy-wheel printers have only one main moving part. A year ago, I gave in and bought a daisy wheel, the Anderson-Jacobson 830 model, which cost about $1,400. In a year of steady use, it has broken once, which is about one tenth as often as the Selectric. You should get one from the start.

NOW THAT YOU know what not to do, you're ready for more positive advice. If I were a shrewder man, I would refuse to give it. One of the perils of dispensing specific advice is that it may be outdated by the time the magazine is in your hands. The products that are available—and their relative values—are changing almost day by day. Fortunately for the consumer, all the change seems to be in the direction of more value for less money. This spring, Radio Shack knocked $400 off the price of its small business computer, the Model II—which sounded impressive until Digital Equipment Corporation knocked $3,500 off the price of its DECmate. The Model II with 64K of memory and one 8" drive went from $3,899 to $3,499, and it can be bought from mail-order firms for about $400 less. The DECmate, with the same memory and two drives, went from $6,595 to $3,095. Meanwhile, several other companies brought small computers onto the market, and there is no end in sight.

Yet another hazard is that recommending the right computer is a little like recommending the "right" religion. People tend to like the system they've ended up with. The most important point about computers, more so than about religions, is that the difference between a good one and a bad one is tiny compared with the difference between having one and not.

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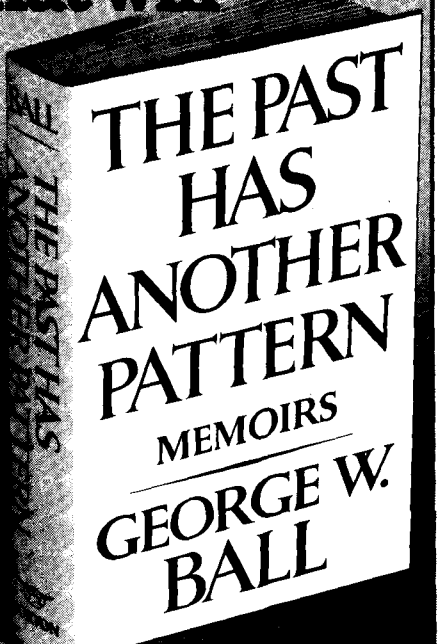

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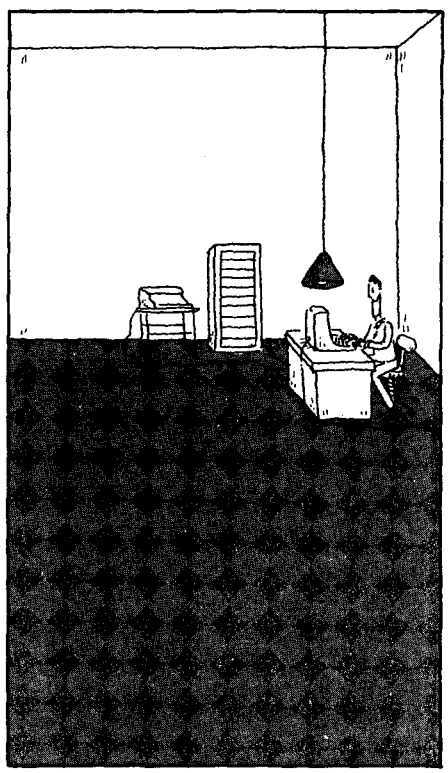
Finally, a computer will be more or less right depending on what you want to do with it. If you are mainly interested in playing chess against a computer, you may be quite happy with some of the low-cost computers that Atari, Commodore, and Radio Shack have put out for under $400. (All three companies also offer good business systems.) If video games are your exclusive interest, you'd probably do better to buy a $150 TV adapter from Atari—although you'd then be shutting yourself off from all the wonders I have described. If getting the feel of a computer is your goal, you could buy a Sinclair ZX81 for $149.95 or $99.95 as a kit. But if you're also interested in business uses for your computer, you might think of systems and programs like the ones mentioned below.

Hardware: Once you move above the bargain-basement machines, to the tier where the computer memories are 48K or larger and the price is $2,000 and up, almost any computer you find will do the job. Over the past few months, in the interests of thorough research, I have tried computers by Apple and Zenith, Victor and Vector, Digital and Wang, Superbrain and Radio Shack, Atari and North Star, to name just a few. Despite their differences in detail, the machines seemed to fall into two big general categories.

One is computers per se, which will cost between $1,500 and $4,000 for the machine itself, plus (for some machines) up to $1,500 for an adequate complement of disk drives. Most good letter-quality printers will cost $1,500 or more, which means the cost of a complete word-processing system is between $5,000 and $6,000. These computers are not specially designed for word-processing, or for anything else. They will run whatever program you feed into them.

In the other category are the dedicated word-processors, which are designed for one purpose only. The IBM Displaywriter is one such machine, and the Wangwriter is another. NBI and Exxon produce similar systems. These cost a lot more than the all-purpose computers—the Displaywriter with a good printer was quoted at $11,350 by my local IBM dealer. They're also easier to use, since they have keys for such things as "delete para," which isn't feasible for more versatile machines. (When I want to delete a paragraph with my machine, I must place a marker at the beginning of the paragraph, place another marker at the end, and then press both the control button and the U key, which is the signal to remove the material between the markers. Easier than scissors and paste, but harder than the Displaywriter.) These single-purpose machines are generally sold not to individuals but to organizations, which presumably would rather pay the price for easily understood machines than train typists in complicated computer routines.

Within each category, your choice of machine depends mainly on taste. You'll spend a lot of time with the keyboard: does it feel right? The Xerox 820 model and my own SOL-20 are my favorites on



this score; I liked the Apple least. Screens come in different colors, sizes, and angles-to-the-horizon. Sometimes the monitor comes attached to the computer, sometimes you buy it separately; you have to try them to know your own taste. Of the ones I've seen, a green-tinted monitor by NEC (model JB 1201M) seemed the best bargain, at $210; but patriots should take note that NEC stands for Nippon Electric Company. Many computers now offer a detachable keyboard, which you can hold on your lap while typing or lay next to a document while you are copying figures or text. Those who have them say they are wonderful; since my SOL doesn't have one, I consider them silly.

Your choice should probably turn on the best deal you can make, in this blissful era of plummeting prices. As of press time, some of the systems that struck me as being good for business uses, and also good values, were (in no particular order) the Xerox 820 ($3,795 with a 64K memory and two 8" drives), the Heath-Zenith 89 ($2,895), and the North Star Advantage ($3,125). The Atari 800 uses your home TV for its monitor, which makes it less desirable for business purposes, but at $1,700 for a 48K system it's a very good buy. The Atari also offers more interesting graphics—for example, color-coded bar graphs for a family budget—than many other systems. The DECmate—at $3,095, as explained above—is a pleasure to use, with a variety of keys usually found only on dedicated word-processors. Its disadvantages are that its software is overpriced—$500 for word-processing, $800 for a mathematical package including BASIC and FORTRAN—and that, at least for now, it is not compatible with CP/M. The TRS-80 Model II from Radio Shack is more expensive than some others—about $4,100 with two 8" drives—but it is the only machine that can operate the word-processing program I prefer above all others, Scripsit 2.0. Both IBM's Personal Computer and the Victor 9000 use a 16-bit microprocessor; both are handsomer than usual; but the Victor has a better screen, more internal memory, and larger external storage, so all in all it gives better value for money ($4,995 for the Victor 9000 with a 128K memory and 1.2 megabytes of storage; IBM offers only a third as much storage for $4,000). The IBM might be the safer long-term choice, however, since manufacturers are already offering accessories designed specifically for it. Both of these machines are, for the moment, caught in a software drought, because the established CP/M programs for 8-bit machines have not been adapted to 16-bit operation. This situation will obviously correct itself, not least because IBM is expected to sell more than 100,000 Personal Computers this year.

The best-known small computer is probably the Apple. Because there are so many Apples in circulation, and because the company has pushed software so aggressively, you can get a wider variety of programs and accessories for an Apple than for any other system. The Apple II, which costs $1,350 with a 48K memory, is good for games, simple

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graphics, and other home uses, and with about a thousand dollars' worth of extra circuitboard it can make a good word-processor. But for business purposes, you'd probably do better to look instead at the Apple III. It costs more than twice as much to begin with, but now that the initial bugs have been worked out, it is ready to do the job without extra attachments.

One of the most interesting new computers, both as a piece of machinery and as a specimen of capitalism in action, is the Osborne I. Its creator is Adam Osborne, an author of computer books who decided to break the price on computers. The Osborne I is a very strange-looking piece of equipment. When folded up, it resembles a bulky white briefcase; it is advertised as the only computer that will fit underneath an airline seat. When unfolded, it looks like an outdated military radio. It comes with a full-sized keyboard, a 64K memory, two disk drives, and software for word-processing and accounting that would cost more than $1,000 if bought separately. Osborne offers the whole package for $1,795, which makes it the best bargain on computer power in the business. The catch is that the built-in screen is about the size of a postcard, although it is much easier to read than that would suggest. For an extra $300, you can buy a normal-sized monitor and attach it to the Osborne.

In a perfect world, everyone who had a home computer would also have an Osborne to travel with. According to dealers, Osbornes are selling so fast that many people must have decided that it makes sense not just as their second computer but as their first.

The Otrona Corporation also makes a portable computer, called the Attache. It is smaller and lighter than the Osborne (less than twenty pounds, versus the Osborne's twenty-three), it has dual-density disk drives, and its higher-resolution screen displays a full eighty-character line, instead of the Osborne's fifty-two. Its only drawback is that, at $3,995, it costs more than twice as much as the Osborne.

One other tip on hardware: If you live in a climate less humid than Panama's, you must invest $100 in an anti-static mat to place under your desk. If you don't, in wintertime you'll get shocks of static electricity when you touch your machine. There is always the possibility that this will erase what you're working on at the time.

Software: If you were a logical creature, you would start here rather than with hardware in making your decision, since certain programs run better on certain machines. Unfortunately, you will find this hard to do. It takes weeks or months of use to know a program well enough to judge it, and to get that much experience you usually have to own a machine. But don't worry: most people seem happy with whatever program they use. I thought my version of The Electric Pencil was the greatest thing invented until I examined the newest word-processing programs and realized I was stuck with something outdated and crude.

The basic choice here is between simplicity and complication. Any word-processing program will do the basic jobs—adding and deleting copy, moving material from one place to another, searching for a word or phrase and replacing it with another. What you get with the fancier versions is mainly refinements in formatting—for example, the automatic placement of footnotes at the bottom of the appropriate pages. There is a cost, however, which is a more cumbersome operation. You have to punch more keys to get things done, and you have to sit longer and wait for the disks to stop whirring and the results to show on the screen.

My program, The Electric Pencil, is a stripped-down model. It's very fast and easy to operate, but there are a lot of things it just can't do—for example, automatically center a line, or stop the printer at the end of each page so you can feed in a new sheet. Today's most popular word-processing program is WordStar. Its users swear by it. It does perform a variety of complicated formatting chores, but to me, on the basis of several hours' worth of demonstration, it seems to have the benefits of neither simplicity nor complexity. It's slow and clumsy to operate, at least in the version I saw on an Apple, without the flexibility of the most sophisticated programs.

If I were looking for a simple program, I'd stick with The Electric Pencil—which I am forced to do in any case, since nothing new on the market will run in my poor obsolescent SOL. Or I might choose Magic Wand, which is simpler to use than many of today's complicated programs. If you're looking for sophistication, I'd suggest you pass by WordStar to choose between two other programs. One of them, Perfect Writer, is available by mail from Perfect Software, Inc., 865 Conger Street, Eugene, Oregon 97402. (The other programs are available from computer stores for prices between $200 and $400.) It is so sophisticated that one might as well be operating a nuclear reactor, but it does things I've seen nowhere else. For example, it allows you to divide the screen with a horizontal line, display one document in the top half and another in the bottom, and move material from one document to the other. It also has a bigger variety of printing formats than most other programs.

The other choice would be Scripsit 2.0, which is put out by Radio Shack and runs on its TRS-80 Model II computer. (Confusing nomenclature: the TRS-80 Models I and III are the cut-rate versions, while the Model II is the serious business machine.) I had snobbishly resisted Radio Shack because of the low-rent appearance of its products, but I was forced to the conclusion that, all in all, Scripsit is the best program on the market. To give one example, it allows you to program up to twenty keys with your own commands. If you press one key, it might print your return address in the upper corner of the page; press another, and it can perform a search-and-replace routine you often use. Like many other programs, Scripsit can also include a spelling-checker, which proofreads documents and is a godsend to the careless typist.

My Picks: If money were no object, I'd buy an IBM Displaywriter, which is the prettiest of all the models and has the simplest commands.

Money being an object, I would vacillate helplessly among the TRS-80 Model II with an extra 8″ disk-drive and Scripsit 2.0, the Xerox 820 with two 8″ drives and Perfect Writer, and the DECmate. And yet, a year from now, when its software has caught up with it, I'd expect to be choosing the IBM Personal Computer. If I received a small bequest, I'd also buy an Osborne I—if the bequest were large, an Otrona—to take on the road. For any of these systems (not including the Osborne), I'd spend no more than $6,000, or half as much as for the Displaywriter.

Godspeed as you follow this advice; meanwhile, I'll be spending nothing, sticking with SOL and The Electric Pencil, and hoping for a world in which my sons can grow up to have a better computer than their father had. □

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BOOKS

THE PURSUIT OF CELEBRITY

BY JAMES ATLAS

EDIE: AN AMERICAN BIOGRAPHY
by Jean Stein, edited with George Plimpton. Knopf, $16.95.

ROBERT F. KENNEDY, bodyguard in tow, showed up at Max's Kansas City to meet her. Bob Dylan wrote songs about her. Andy Warhol put her in his movies. When the hippie in her underground film *Ciao! Manhattan* meets a wraithlike girl hitchhiking on the Old Malibu Road at four in the morning, "he has no idea that his own life-style, his independence, his self-awareness, his whole generation has been created by her, by Edie Sedgwick," explains the film's director. By whom? The moment of cultural superstars is pitilessly brief—fifteen minutes, according to Warhol's celebrated dictum—and unless you happened to be hanging around New York in the sixties, taking in the disco scene, reading the gossip columns, and getting invited to the right parties, chances are you're as out of it as the Malibu hippie, who "has absolutely no idea what she's talking about; he cannot relate to it in the least."

Jean Stein and the cheerful, hip George Plimpton have gone to great lengths to clue us in, interviewing everyone who was anyone—and many who were not—during that hectic era, from Norman Mailer, Truman Capote, Jasper Johns, and Gore Vidal to socialites, forgotten pop figures of the day, and out-and-out freaks with names like Cherry Vanilla and Paul America. If you don't happen to know who they were, you won't find out here; the book's never-apologize, never-explain format consists entirely of quotations: no preface, no descriptions of the speakers when they appear, no text whatever, just a name and a soliloquy. And if you never heard of Nico, Viva, or Gerard Malanga, you must have been somewhere else in those years—the library, or home in Illinois.

This collage method is a shrewd narrative device; it enriches and amplifies what would otherwise be a sorry tale about a suicidal girl from an old-line family who got involved in the sixties pop-world drug scene and was dead at twenty-eight, apparently the victim of an overdose. For all her notoriety, Edie was a sadly limited figure—confused, spoiled, inarticulate. Her own voice in this medley, transcribed from her monologues in *Ciao! Manhattan,* is laconic and wan, a lurid account of sex orgies, drug binges, and confinements in mental hospitals. And her accomplishments were modest, to say the least; the star of a few underground movies scarcely requires several hundred pages of fervent reminiscence. A whole book about her might have been tedious. But *Edie* goes some way toward justifying its pompous subtitle, *An American Biography.* Her story *is* American, for it illustrates the hold that class, fame, and money have on our imagination, and how ruthless our pursuit of them can be. "What Avery wanted to be was chic," one catty member of Edie's retinue says about another—"which was all anybody wanted at that time." Or any other time.

TO BE CHIC: GIVEN Edie's pedigree, it shouldn't have been hard. The Sedgwicks were old money, a family that dated back to the American Revolution. Judge Theodore Sedgwick, first speaker of the House of Representatives, built a mansion in Stockbridge, Massachusetts—"It has always been the Old House to the family," says one of Edie's sisters—and established his clan, proper New England WASPs who prided themselves on their lineage and insisted upon burial in the Pie, a plot of land where generations of Sedgwicks lie, surrounding their venerable ancestor. They had a summer house on the St. Lawrence River, and grand picnics—"thin sandwiches with cucumbers in them, and watercress, and almost no mayonnaise and a lot of butter and no crusts," recalls a relative. "Everything was just so. Even the Sedgwick lemonade had to be made in a certain way. But it was all taken for granted. It was that way because it had always been. . . . Tradition, that was all the Sedgwicks thought about."

The old Sedgwicks might have been just as dotty as their contemporary heirs, but a vale of nostalgia preserves their rectitude. Those recent enough to be remembered by the living seem as eccentric and inbred as any backwoods Appalachians. Edie's Uncle Minturn ordered pine coffins for the whole family and tested them for size. Her grandfather, Babbo, was a crusty epicurean who gave up his New York law practice to dabble in the arts, and was more than a little unstable; he once tried to commit suicide, but was thwarted by a clerk who sold him the wrong type of ammunition for his gun.

There was something distinctly ominous about the whole clan. Babbo, who believed that "the two essential things to do at Harvard were to play football and to join the Porcellian Club," belittled the prowess of his son Francis—Edie's father—and reminded him that he would always be "Little Duke" (Babbo was the "real" Duke). The beleaguered boy's mother held his finger over a lighted candle to teach him about heat. A cousin attacked her brother with a carving knife, and eventually committed suicide. ("She was very tempestuous, Rosamond was.") The rich *are* different from you and me.

Edie's father was in trouble from the start. Just out of Harvard, he had a nervous breakdown abroad and was shipped back to the States, where he managed to marry money and became a sculptor, commuting to a Manhattan studio from his wife's Long Island estate. A tanned, muscular Adonis obsessed with his health, he jogged and rowed, strode onto the tennis court bare-chested, and exercised in a loincloth, his body-builder's torso glistening with oil. He refused to vote for Adlai Stevenson because "'he looked like a woman—breasts and a flabby stomach—and besides he was bald.'"

The Francis Sedgwicks bred with narcissistic ardor, producing children on whom they bestowed adorable upper-class nicknames: Minty, Suky, Saucie. Edie, born in 1943, was the seventh of eight. The family radiated a Gatsby-like grace: "They made everyone else around feel a little rumpled and dowdy," George Plimpton recalls. On the California ranch where they lived from the mid-forties on, a Spanish stucco villa in the foothills of Santa Barbara, Ruysdaels hung on the wall. In the evenings they sat by the fire and read nineteenth-century novels aloud. They rode horses over the wild

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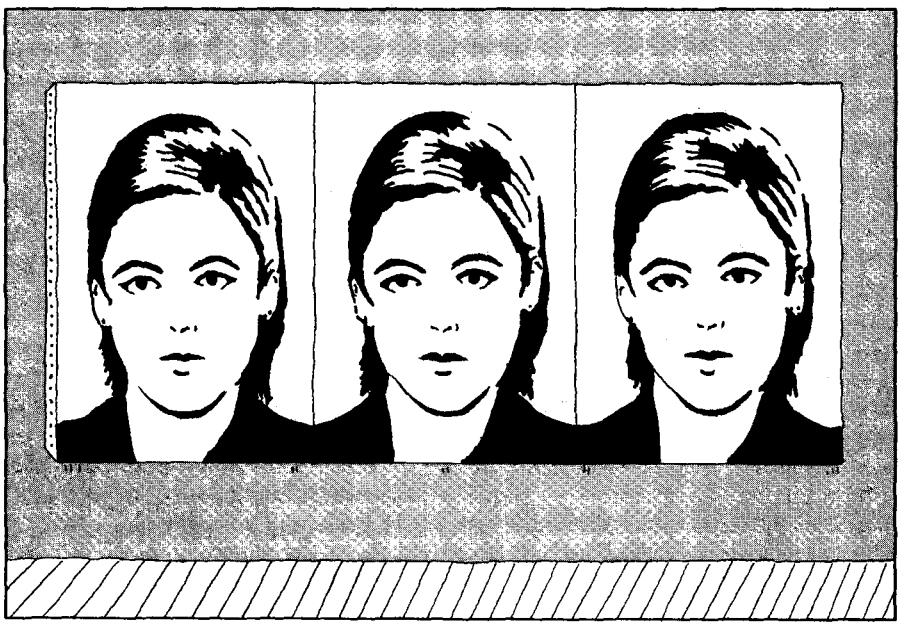
open land. Even the children, soon to be destroyed by this infinite privilege, were seduced by its aura. "When we were little, we thought that our parents lived the life of Greek gods," Saucie Sedgwick says. "There was a tremendous feeling of happiness in that place—so incredible in light of what happened later."

What happened later was that her brother Minturn ("Minty") hanged himself in a psychiatric clinic when he was twenty-five; another brother, Bobby, smashed into a bus on his motorcycle and died at thirty-one; and Edie submitted herself to a regimen of drugs designed to finish her off as soon as possible. The surviving siblings who were willing to talk (two of Edie's sisters have apparently stayed out of it) sound a little shaky. "Sometimes I wonder how many people a family can destroy with their stupidity," Jonathan Sedgwick laments, recalling Edie's funeral.

Only it wasn't just stupidity that wrecked this family; the self-hatred, rage, and vanity they inflicted on each other make *Long Day's Journey Into Night* seem as benign as *The Brady Bunch*. Francis collected women with bold insouciance, parading his conquests before his children, competing with his sons for their girlfriends, making passes at his daughters—all in all, a thoroughly monstrous fellow. His wife comes through less distinctly. She clearly wanted nothing to do with this book, and is depicted by her daughters as variously solicitous and remote. Some witnesses remember her hastening to Edie's side during every crisis; others remember her as indifferent to her children's collective ruin. Like the Greek gods to whom Saucie Sedgwick compares them, the Sedgwick parents hurled down vengeance from the Olympus of their California ranch, then trotted off for a game of doubles. "They *had* to be gods," Saucie bitterly remarks, "if they were to avoid what happens to humans."

What is so troubling about this compilation of testimony is that it somehow glorifies these awful people while appearing to condemn them. Reverence for the graces and amenities of the rich is tenacious, and not even the misery this family brought upon itself can discourage various commentators from admiring its style. Cold Spring Harbor, where the Sedgwicks summered, "was a very simple community which attracted the best," Plimpton effuses, "because it made a point of not being at all flamboyant or like a Gold Coast." John P. Marquand, Jr. has a dignified laugh at the expense of Norman Podhoretz, who once made the mistake of asking where the Sedgwick money came from. "You're not supposed to ask things like that," Marquand reminds us. "It's just *there*." Poor Norman. It's a pity what happened to the Sedgwicks, but how much worse to be . . . someone else.

TO REBEL AGAINST all this old blood and old money was no easy matter. Edie's downward odyssey started in Cambridge, where she fell in with a flamboyant homosexual crowd whose idea of a good time was to get smashed at the Ritz and stick her with the bill.



Like her father, Edie purported to be an artist, but she was really a collector of people. The phone was always ringing, the days and nights were squandered in a succession of parties. If Edie had any talent, it was for surrounding herself with cruel, aimless hangers-on; the testimony of her Cambridge crowd is a depressing chronicle of hectic adventures among a throng of lost souls. "We stood up on our chairs and began doing the twist," a participant in one Ritz luncheon gleefully recounts. "There were some Iowans or something who left in the middle of their meal because they were so scandalized at what we were doing." What a bunch of stiffs.

Cambridge was too confined to satisfy Edie's limitless quest for attention, so it was on to New York, where she met up with Andy Warhol and his weird gang. Warhol, a poor boy from Pittsburgh, was fascinated by Edie's glamour and wealth. "Andy is a terrific snob," says a typically generous observer of the scene. "He was a fashion creature and he absorbed a lot of the snobbish values of the fashion world." He collected celebrities and, when he was famous enough, made them. Edie, with her beehive hairdo, hoop earrings, leopard suits, and leotards, was suitably picturesque and came from an old family besides; no wonder it was "this immediate thing." He put her in his movies and turned her on (the language is contagious) to the Felliniesque world of the Factory—hardly a wholesome environment. "The whole last scene was filmed with people on poppers—amyl nitrates," Ondine recalls of the shooting of *Vinyl*. "*Boom!* It seemed like the entire room was stoned. I mean *just out of it*. When the film was over, we went off in the hallways and up on the roof. I was in the hallway with Pierre's lover, who was really beautiful. Pierre was up on the roof with somebody else. Somebody was in the bathroom with somebody. People did things on the couch."

Warhol, it emerges from this titillating document, was a ruthless manipulator who gathered around him the needy and confused, exploiting their willingness—their eagerness—to do *anything*. The camera is a powerful instrument; it unleashes the narcissism of those who parade before it while preserving the director's anonymity. Warhol's mystery derives from his remoteness, the passive

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voyeurism of his art, which appears to register its subjects without comment and thus lulls them into self-betrayal. His own lust for publicity was insatiable. Lying in a hospital bed near death after he was shot by Valerie Solanis, he could still hound a reporter who had done an article on him about when it would appear in *Life*. But his docile, enervated pose made him seem egoless, unthreatening—just the pose to liberate his entourage from its inhibitions.

IF IT SOUNDS LIKE fun, it wasn't. "My introduction to heavy drugs came through the Factory," Edie testified in *Ciao! Manhattan*. "I was a good target for the scene; I blossomed into a healthy young drug addict." The consumption of drugs was awesome. Amphetamines, LSD, cocaine, were injected, swallowed, snorted, with suicidal zeal. The story of Edie's New York years is strewn with casualties: "You won't find Victor now. Down the hatch." "You remember the lady who killed herself—Andrea Feldman?" "I liked Eric. . . . he finally OD'd."

For Edie, the descent was slower. She drifted from East 63rd Street to the Chelsea Hotel to a cold-water flat on the Lower East Side, squandering her inheritance on clothes, limousines, drugs, and dinner parties attended by squads of sordid consorts. Sent home to California after a terrifying confinement on Ward's Island in Manhattan, she married a boy of twenty and then lived on for four more months, a premature, doomed invalid.

It's a dreary saga, and Edie's nihilistic mania wears thin after a while, but there is something poignant about her story. For all her will to wreck herself, she had a greedy longing for experience, a resilient nerve, an appreciation of life's transience. She was attractive in a vulnerable way, both romantic and street-tough, worldly and innocent. She was drawn to those "who had seen the big sadness."

And this garrulous testimony is hypnotic. It conjures up a world that would hardly seem worth documenting if it weren't for the fascination of the disembodied voices babbling their stories into a tape recorder. "I could talk to them," Edie's brother Jonathan boasts of his rapport with animals. "They do what I ask. They come to me in the wild. A little fawn came right up to me, man. Blew me out." "Here's two of my brothers shooting tongue," explains a biker named T Talley, leafing through snapshots of his gang: "Otherwise, kissing. That's quite common with bikers. It's not because we're fags. Like, if I haven't seen a brother in a long time, I'll go up there and, instead of shaking hands, I'll go up and shoot some tongue because I love him so much." Reading *Edie* is like listening to an all-night talk show; it has its longueurs, but enough memorable characters to keep us tuned in.

What is even more frightening than Edie's demise is the spectacle of those who colluded in it—the procession of freaks and sycophants who trailed after this despondent waif in search of kicks. How flattered everyone is, how proud to have been on the scene! And none more so than the famous, tripping over themselves in their efforts to be hip. Norman Mailer is glad to report that Edie tried out for his play, *The Deer Park*; Victor Navasky lets it be known that he appeared with her on the David Susskind show; Diana Vreeland remembers that Edie had "a sense of the sort of rollick of life, you know, the fun of life." Everyone knew Edie, from the bedraggled addicts on East 5th Street to the Social Register Watsons and Burdens. She was flown out to Joan Kennedy's birthday party in Hyannis. She sailed on Jock Whitney's yacht.

There is something pitiful about this desperate pursuit of celebrity—especially of a celebrity who was such a burned-out case. The snobbery of the rich and famous is nothing new; but it seems craven and pathetic in this chronicle, devoid of even the hard assurance and grace of Fitzgerald's upper class. The image of Bobby Kennedy arriving at a New York bar for his audience with Edie is dispiriting. Wasn't *anyone* immune? □

SHORT REVIEWS

MICKELSSON'S GHOSTS *by John Gardner. Knopf, $16.95.* The protagonist (one can hardly call him a hero) of Mr. Gardner's novel is a once-distinguished professor of philosophy whose career, marriage, finances, and wits have fallen into extreme disrepair. As distraction from his troubles, Mickelsson acquires a run-down house in a superstition-ridden countryside and sets about putting the place in order. The house proves to be genuinely haunted, but the ghosts are the least of Mickelsson's difficulties. With an ingenuity that borders on the awesome, Mr. Gardner has afflicted the poor fellow with every possible misfortune except an atomic strike. The author's intention, presumably, is to create a metaphor for the problems, new or inherited, burdening contemporary society, but despite fine writing and some splendid individual scenes, the novel ends by arousing numb disbelief. There is simply too much of everything, real or fantastic; the disasters cancel each other out and become meaningless.

ON GOING TO BED *by Anthony Burgess. Abbeville, $12.95.* There are people who loathe going to bed and those who delight in it, people who detest getting up and idiots who rise happily with the sun. There are also combinations of all these types. Start thinking about them, and beds become a rich source of speculation, conclusion, fancy, or suspicion. They also come in an amusing variety of shapes and materials. Mr. Burgess's reflections on beds are ingenious, witty, and a bit tart. He himself regards going to bed as an invitation to evil dreams and things that go bump in the night—one of these bumps being Mr. Burgess falling out of his treacherous piece of furniture.

IN PRAISE OF PRACTICAL FERTILIZER *by John Baskin. Norton, $14.95.* Mr. Baskin's short essays and sketches describe life in an Ohio farming community threatened with extinction by modern encroachments of dubious merit. "From the buggy to the moon in my period," says one old local; it is this awareness of the rush of time that gives an undertone of melancholy to even the funniest of these reports—and many of them are very funny indeed.

SOMETHING LIKE AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY *by Akira Kurosawa, translated by Audie E. Bock. Knopf, $15.00.* The great Japanese film director was born in 1910 to a Samurai family of declining fortunes, and drifted into the movie business almost by accident. His qualifications for film-making were simple. He loved watching films, had seen a vast number of them, and possessed a talent for both words and pictures. That talent had, in fact, been the downfall of his for-

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mal education, for its obverse side was a total ineptitude with objects and numbers. ("My son," the author confesses, "tells me that when I use the telephone it's as if a chimpanzee were trying to place a call.") The sharp eye and the eloquence have combined to produce a memoir that is vivid and interesting, whether it concerns Mr. Kurosawa's schooling—complete with fencing lessons—or the horrifying devastation of the 1923 earthquake, or the brainless zeal of wartime film censors. The account ends with the making of *Rashōmon*, and leaves the reader hoping for more.

Ugly Girl *by Barbara Rex. Norton, $13.95.* Upper-crust Philadelphia in the 1920s is the setting of Ms. Rex's novel, and she gives the place a hatchet job that makes Lizzie Borden seem languid. Between whacks at Philadelphia, the author convincingly develops her heroine from an intimidated and reluctant debutante to a successful, independent professional woman who operates, naturally, in New York. The book is good reading and its thesis should encourage feminine ambition, for if pedigreed Philadelphia can be licked, any other place should be a pushover.

Me Again *by Stevie Smith. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, $15.95.* This previously uncollected material, which includes short stories, verse, essays, book reviews, and drawings, has been assembled and edited by Jack Barbera and William McBrien to display the various aspects of Smith's work, from her terse poems and pseudo-childlike fiction to the sophisticated literary judgments that prove how deliberately she narrowed her vocabulary and her vision for creative, as opposed to critical, purposes. Smith's admirers will surely enjoy the book, and readers unfamiliar with this cranky, irreverent artist will find it a sound, possibly enticing introduction.

Blood River *by Barbara Villet with photographs by Grey Villet. Everest, $16.95.* Ms. Villet offers a history of South Africa interspersed with quotations from contemporary Afrikaners whose views, like the proceedings of their government, derive, in her opinion, from a Calvinism that has survived almost unchanged since the seventeenth century. Whether or not one altogether accepts the author's explanation for the

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Can you imagine a child whose vocabulary included "rectangle" and "hexagon" but not the simple question "What's that?"

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But Elly's story does not end there. Fifteen years later, she is a sunny and contributing member of her family, has a part-time job, and exhibits and sells her own paintings. We couldn't be more pleased to publish this new, updated edition, which includes a 15,000-word epilogue and a photo section with samples of Elly's art. Beautifully written, it is now a remarkable success story, a testament to the power of courage and love.

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LITTLE, BROWN

"seemingly inscrutable workings of the Afrikaner mind," her book is a useful and remarkably concise presentation of three centuries of action in Afrikaner country. Much of that action was precipitated by the old settlers' attempts to avoid being swallowed up by the British Empire, and may indeed have confirmed in Afrikaners an antique notion of themselves as God's chosen people, assigned to preserve traditional virtue against heathenish innovation. Such a position would certainly make flexibility of either the social or the political system extremely difficult.

THE MAN WHO WAS VOGUE *by Caroline Seebohm. Viking, $18.95.* The forebears of Condé Nast were respectable, cultivated midwesterners but, by the late nineteenth century, so short of cash that the young man went to work for *Collier's Weekly* owning little more than the clothes on his back. He proved a wizard at raising both circulation and advertising and by 1909 was able to buy *Vogue*, which he wanted because he had, at first sight, fallen in love with the dazzle of New York society. *Vogue* was at that point a rather amateur affair, published for and by the rich and well-born, with nobody giving much energy to the business except a young assistant editor named Edna Woolman Chase. Nast had no desire to alter or broaden the magazine's audience. Fashionable society—upper case—was to remain *Vogue*'s target, subject, and *raison d'être*. But in that limited field, the perfectionist Nast meant to make it the best magazine in the world—the handsomest, the liveliest, the most innovative, the most influential, and incidentally the most profitable. With the invaluable help of Mrs. Chase, he succeeded. He also married into the Social Register, built an international publishing empire, threw numerous and extravagant parties, and, although shy to the point of primness, won a reputation for what pretty junior editors called "the obligatory pounce." (The pounce, it appears, could be deflected.) Nast liked to describe himself as no more than a glorified bookkeeper, but in truth he was a superb editor, with an almost infallible eye for the combination of novelty and elegance that made his magazine genuinely the best of its kind. By the late 1920s he had more money than he knew what to do with, so, like everybody else in those merry days, he took to the stock market and the great crash ruined him. Through the kindness of friends he was allowed to remain in editorial control at *Vogue*. Aging, lonely, increasingly short-tempered, hampered by absentee owners who niggled over nickels, he fussed indomitably along, bluffing prosperity, living on credit, and begging shamelessly on behalf of his magazine. But he had not lost his touch. In the aftermath of disaster, only three years before his death in 1942, Nast perceived that a mass market existed for a magazine devoted to inexpensive chic, and launched *Glamour*. It was one of the quickest successes in the history of magazine publishing, but nothing could salvage Nast's personal fortunes. At his death, his assets came to about $150,000. His debts were figured in millions. There is real drama in the pattern of such a life, and Ms. Seebohm has presented the story admirably, making skillful use of Nast's whole milieu—social connections, friends, enemies, the brilliant and often maddening people who worked for *Vogue*, and the exciting progress in photography and printing that Nast encouraged.

TWICE SHY *by Dick Francis. Putnam's, $13.95.* Like most of Mr. Francis's excellent thrillers, this novel has a firm base in reality—specifically, in the practice of releasing a convicted murderer from prison with the optimistic assumption that incarceration has mended his ways. The murderer, a thoroughly nasty type, has gone to prison through the efforts of Jonathan Derry. Once out, he seeks revenge and runs into Jonathan's younger brother, William. It is a daring move to construct a thriller with two narrators and a gap of fourteen years bang in the middle, but Mr. Francis brings the trick off. With no discernible change in prose style, he makes the Derry brothers unmistakably different people. Jonathan is wily, wary, and, possibly because he teaches physics at a boys' school full of "little monsters," inclined to rush in and take charge. William is cheerfully direct and asks only to be left in peace with his mistress and his horses. Mr. Francis has contrived exciting problems for both of them.

THE RISE AND FALL OF DIAMONDS *by Edward Jay Epstein. Simon and Schuster, $14.50.* A portion of this book originally appeared in *The Atlantic*, in somewhat different form.

—Phoebe-Lou Adams

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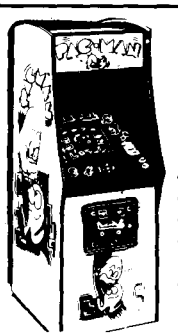

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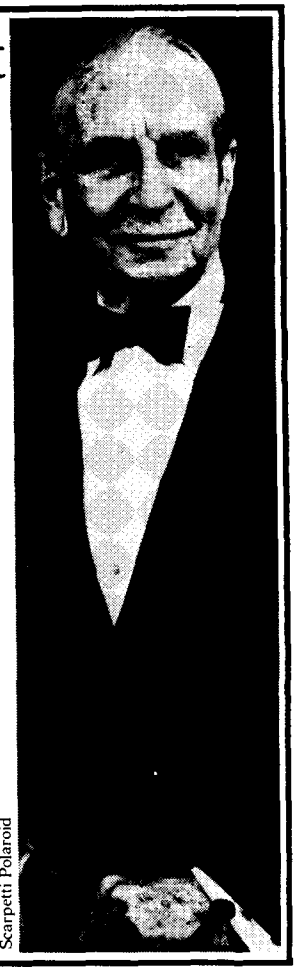

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1.a. FORE(ST)S b. SILESIA (anag.) c. A-TONE d. EVEN-T 2.a. TES(T[AM]ENT)AL (*tales* anag.) b. LINKS (double def.) c. SAG-A'S 3.a. SERGE-ANT b. T(o)-RIO c. (pr)OGRESS d. SH-AH 4.a. H(ELL)OES b. STOA (anag.) c. A-SHE d. ECOLE (hidden) 5.a. EAR(THE)N b. NETS (double def.) c. SWARD (rev.) d. DIGS (double def.) e. STEEP (double def.) 6.a. PATTER (pun) b. RADI-I (anag. + *i*) c. (p)INCHED d. D(ETE)C-T (*tee* anag.) 7.a. TO-LE(RAN)T b. T(H)UG c. GO-RE 8.a. EMERGENT (anag.) b. TILLER (double def.) c. ROASTS (anag.) d. SCOP (anag.) 9.a. P(RATTLE)D b. D(IAGN)OSE (*gain* anag.) c. ERIE (hidden) d. EME([h]ER)S (*seem* anag.)

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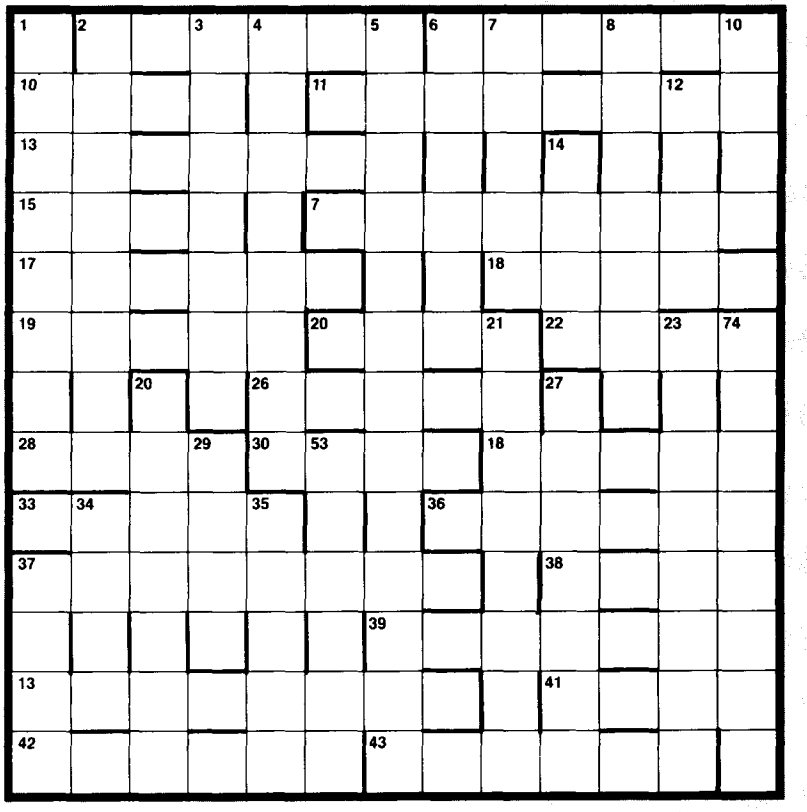
THE ATLANTIC PUZZLER

BY EMILY COX AND HENRY RATHVON

NUMBER PUZZLE

The diagram may seem to be numbered strangely. The basic reason for this puzzling matter is left for solvers to discover. Clue answers include four proper nouns. Punctuation may be used deceptively.



The solution to last month's Puzzler appears on page 99.

ACROSS

10. Animated fellow is an exerciser (4)
11. Whitewash fence around back end (8)
13. Confounded bird finally sang (7)
15. Author takes heroin after breakdown (4)
17. Radio feature, possibly, that is gotten in a car (6)
18. Imports instrument (5)
19. Hurry and put back rose (5) *(two words)*
20. Mary Jane grabbing the rear of the bard (4)
22. Record the reason for male being mate? (4)
26. Private meal has no appetizer? (5)
28. Trap snares a ruminant (4)
30. Face that's "mellow"? (4)
33. Flatten part of a wooden chair (5)
36. Sharp note held by crooner (6)
37. Drinks on tap? This calls for decorations (8)
38. An immortal has life more than once (4)
39. Starting northern climb (7)
41. Tow to East coast (4)
42. See bum lurching in daze (6)
43. Presbyters' trees (6)

DOWN

2. Watch, he'll get "gold disc" record (8)
4. Brave takes pride in running with chief of tribe (8)
5. Prominent way a magazine is covering a scene of a crime (13) *(two words)*
6. Lump on male dress (6)
7. In morning, God causes terror (5)
8. Deal with an influx of lawyers? (7)
12. Next and finally, salt chicken (4)
14. Carol, the train's not here? (4)
21. Pirates' pitching dynamo initially was a Ranger (8)
23. Executions progressing amid pains (8)
27. For example, a drink around Route 99 (7)
29. Picket toplessly—that's appropriate (4)
34. Survey Italian river and lakes (4)
35. Hacks the front of telephone line between the poles (5)
37. Grouse back in Barbar country (4)

Note: The instructions above are for this month's puzzle only. It is assumed that you know how to decipher clues. For a complete introduction to clue-solving, write to The Atlantic Reprint Department, 8 Arlington Street, Boston, Mass. 02116, enclosing a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

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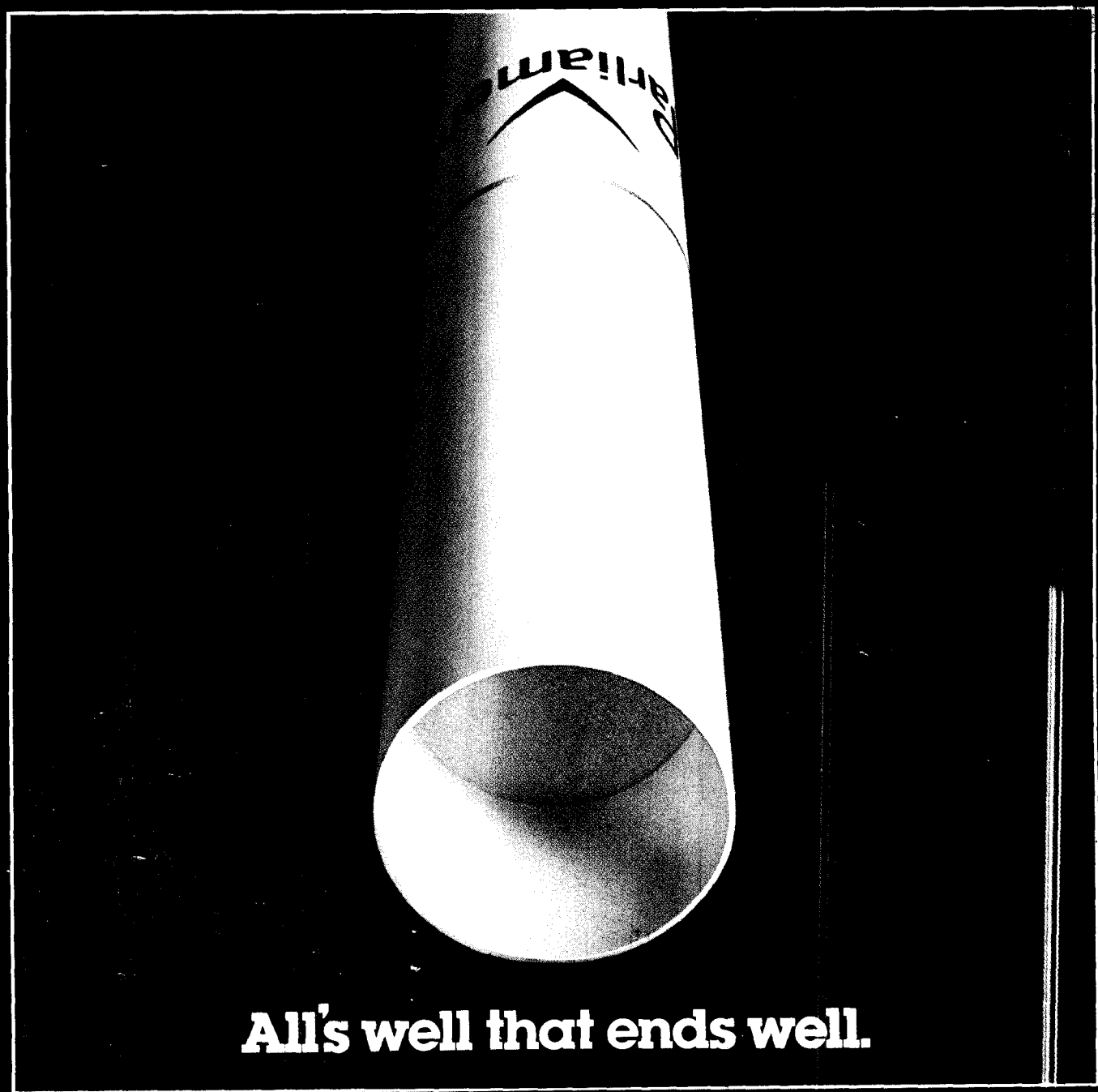

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